Collier's
TEN CENTS
JUNE 16, 1945

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TERROR IN JAPAN
Ten Days that Turned the Tide
By MARK GAYN

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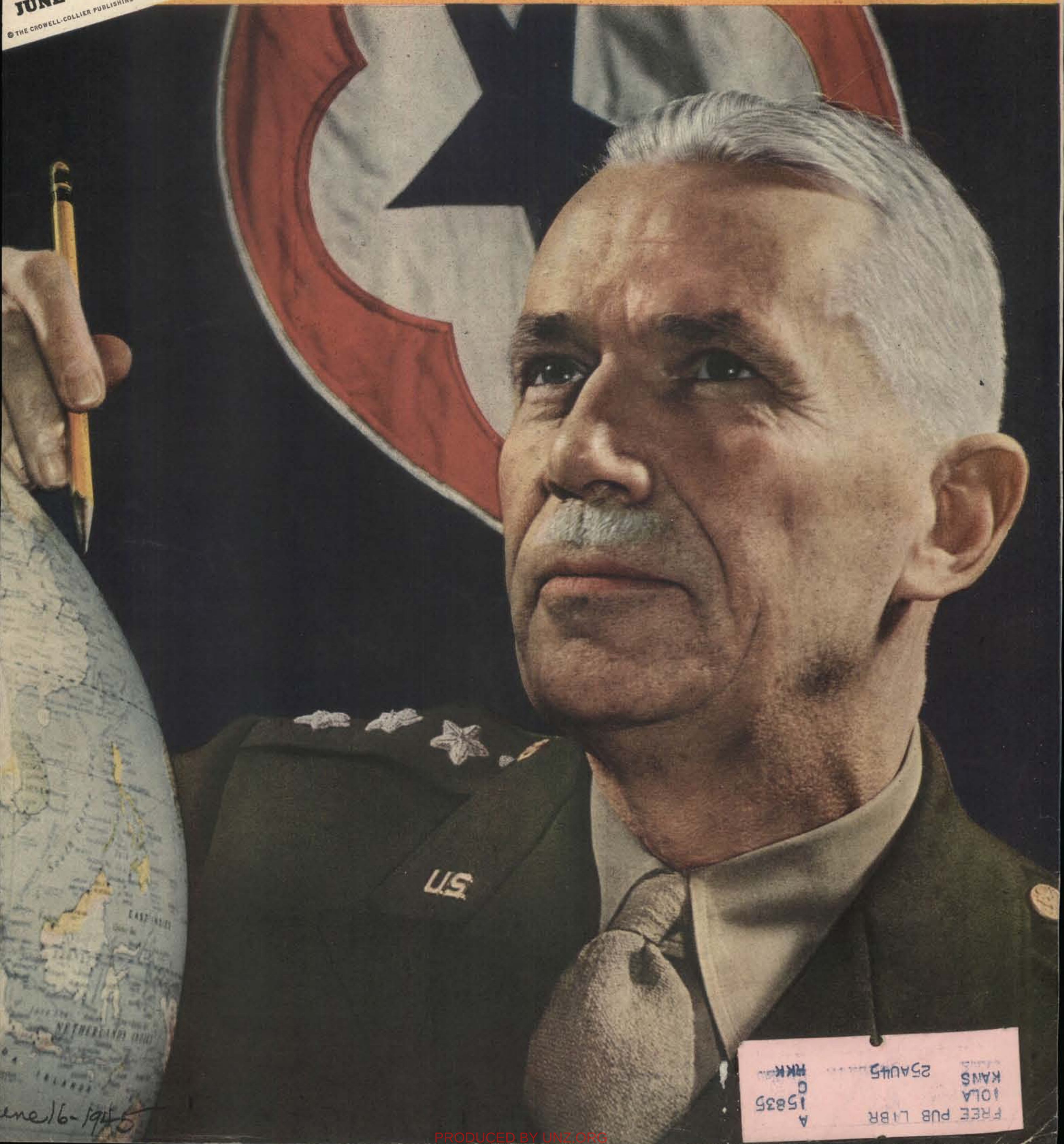
GENERAL BREHON B. SOMERVELL, Commanding General Army Service Forces

PHOTOGRAPH BY BOB LEAVITT



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WELL-BEING IN GLASS: A LIFT TO LIVING

1/5 MILK AND CHEESE
1/5 FATS, SUGAR, OTHER GROCERIES
1/5 MEAT, FISH, EGGS
1/5 VEGETABLES AND FRUIT
1/5 BREADS AND CEREALS
YOUR $ FOOD $ BUDGET SHOULD BE:

Dr. Nature's prescription for the whole human race: MILK! The one food both babies and grownups thrive on *best!* It's brimming with calcium, phosphorus, protein, Vitamin A, and *goodness*. So don't skip *your* milk. You should drink at least 3 glasses daily... and each child, a quart.

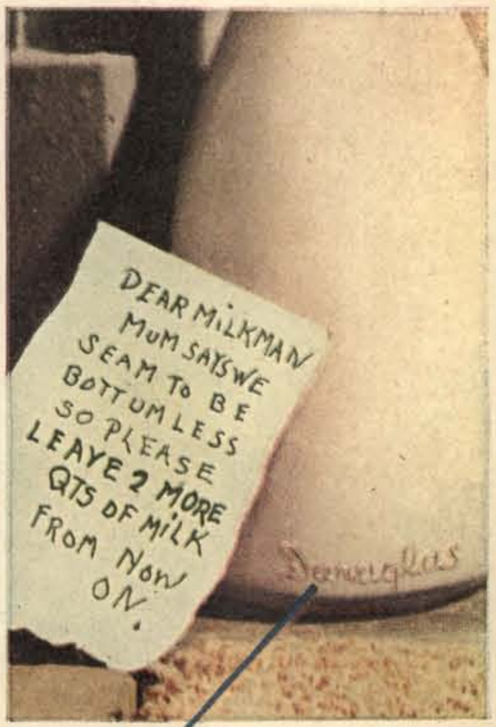
"Milk's 1/5 of my food budget," says Ida Bailey Allen, radio dietician and home adviser of 20 years' standing ... with cookbooks in 14 million homes. "I love it at mealtimes—and afternoons, too, when young friends drop in. I buy milk in bottles, because then I know it's clean and sanitary—and *I* think it tastes better!" Drink milk for more bounce in your step, sounder bones, clearer skin, steadier nerves. Check your food budget against this approved nutrition chart. If you're cheating on the milk "fifth," step up your order, today!

Treat your family to these milk-rich dishes. They'll love 'em!

1. Crusty corn pudding . . . 4 servings contain 2 cups
2. Featherlight popovers . . . 4 servings contain 1 cup
3. Chocolate pecan pie . . . 4 servings contain 3½ cups
4. Raspberry ice cream sundae . . . 4 servings contain 2 cups
5. Chocolate milk . . . 1 serving contains 1½ cups

Buy milk in bottles—guardians of purity, quality. In clean, sanitary, thrifty glass, you can *see* the richness of the milk you buy. And you know you'll get only *milk's* pure flavor—for glass has no taste of its own! Bottles are stable, substantial, leakproof—handy to pour from, too!

OWENS-ILLINOIS GLASS COMPANY . . . TOLEDO 1, OHIO—makers of containers that give a "lift to living"


DEAR MILKMAN
MUM SAYS WE
SEAM TO BE
BOTTUMLESS
SO PLEASE
LEAVE 2 MORE
QTS OF MILK
FROM NOW
ON.
Duraglas

Duraglas

TRADE MARK REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

A NAME THAT HELPS
YOU SEE WHAT YOU BUY!

"Oooh Dad—what you just did!"

DAD: All right. All right. What's so terrible? Brushed my teeth, didn't I? Used Ipana, too.

BUSTER: Oh, it isn't *that,* Dad—

SISTER: No, what we mean is . . .

TOGETHER: . . . *You brushed your teeth without massaging your gums!*

DAD: And that's *bad?*

BUS: Why, Pop, and you a college man! Even third graders are taught that if you don't massage your gums every time you brush your teeth, gums are apt to get tender and sensitive.

SIS: Yep, 'cause the soft, creamy foods we eat don't give gums the chewy exercise they need to help keep them firm and healthy. See, Popsy?

DAD: Hmmmmmm. Maybe that has some connection with this "pink" on my tooth brush.

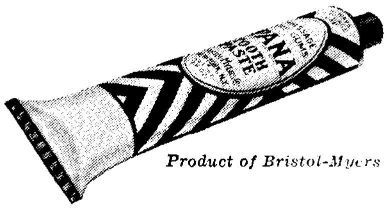
BUS: Could be, Dad, could be. And the best connection you can make for "pink tooth brush" is a date with your dentist!

Despite the fact that a national survey shows 7 out of 10 dentists recommend regular gum massage, many parents still know less about this dental health routine than their children.

This is because gum massage and its relation to healthy gums and sparkling teeth is being taught today in thousands of the nation's schools.

If you have received a warning signal from *your* gums in the form of a tinge of "pink" on your tooth brush, *see your dentist right away.* He may merely suggest, as so many do, "the helpful stimulation of Ipana and massage."

For Ipana Tooth Paste is especially designed, with massage, to protect the health of the gums. One reason why more than twice as many dentists use Ipana *for their own teeth* . . . as any other dentifrice.



Product of Bristol-Myers

Guard against "Pink Tooth Brush"

with IPANA and MASSAGE!

RCA Victor
IF IT'S RCA IT IS THE BEST!
"HIS MASTER'S VOICE"
RADIOS • PHONOGRAPHS • TELEVISION RECEIVERS
RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA • RCA VICTOR DIVISION • CAMDEN, N. J.

Collier's
FOR JUNE 16, 1945

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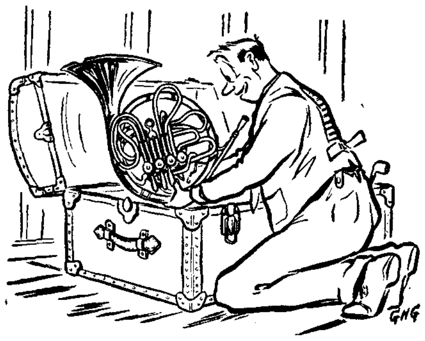
COVER By *ROBERT LEAVITT*

any week

WE'VE been away. War correspondent. Terrible. In our absence, Mr. Gurney Williams in the next office has been doing this chore. We appreciate what he's done but wish he had not been so good at our job. That's gratitude for you. We train this guy Williams, then trust him. And while our back's turned, he double-crosses us with superior work. Mr. Williams is a candidate for selectman or something in Chappaqua, New York, and we wish hereby to warn the people of Chappaqua that no good can come of his election.

MR. EDDIE HALIBUT of Homestead Hollow, Idaho, has written his first letter to an editor—to us. Only letter he's written to anyone in sixteen years, he says. It took a radio appeal to arouse him. "Everything was all right until I heard a radio announcer say: 'Ladies . . . Why not look around the house for any discarded band instruments you may have lying around? The liberated people of devastated Europe can use them.' " Mr. Halibut adds: "I have been looking all over the house for Grandma's old French horn. It must be here somewheres."



OUR secretary says that she knows a woman who wrote to her soldier husband in Australia. Quite a bulky envelope. The post office sent it back to her demanding more postage if it was to go by air mail—seventy-eight cents in fact. "Hell!" said she gently. "If I had seventy-eight cents I wouldn't be bothering him."

BUT personally we know an admiral who, as a court of last appeal, sustained a censor in an argument with a war correspondent who had written emotionally about a few selected Jap atrocities. The admiral killed the piece, saying that such writing would only create hatred in America for the Jap.

WELL, the old be-gentle-with-our-fallen-foe racket is getting under way nicely. We have four letters from suet-hearted citizens who assure us that after all the German "people" are a kind, industrious, cultured folk who were merely misled by evil men. As these letters fall briskly into

(Continued on page 66)

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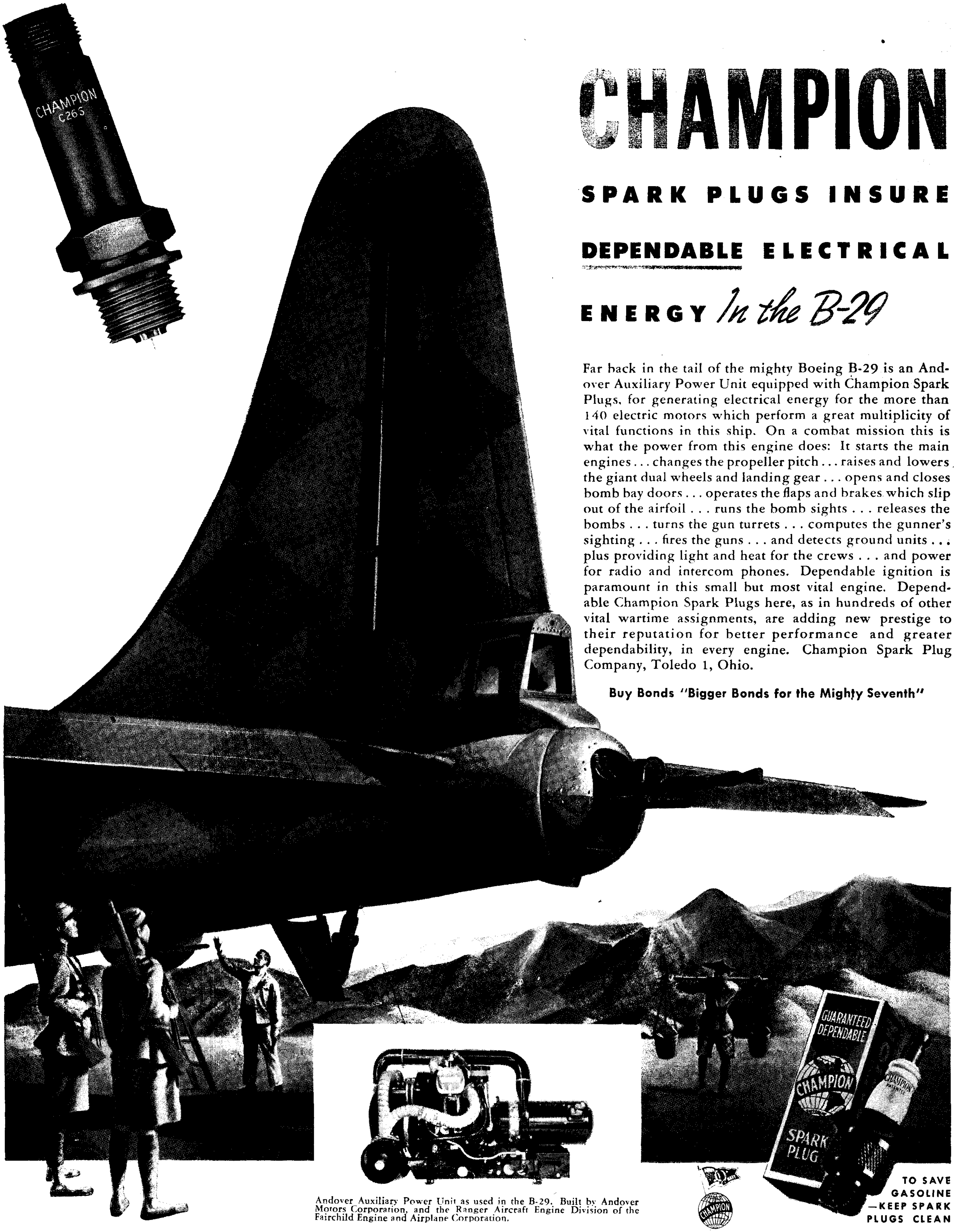


CHAMPION

SPARK PLUGS INSURE DEPENDABLE ELECTRICAL ENERGY *In the B-29*

Far back in the tail of the mighty Boeing B-29 is an Andover Auxiliary Power Unit equipped with Champion Spark Plugs, for generating electrical energy for the more than 140 electric motors which perform a great multiplicity of vital functions in this ship. On a combat mission this is what the power from this engine does: It starts the main engines . . . changes the propeller pitch . . . raises and lowers the giant dual wheels and landing gear . . . opens and closes bomb bay doors . . . operates the flaps and brakes which slip out of the airfoil . . . runs the bomb sights . . . releases the bombs . . . turns the gun turrets . . . computes the gunner's sighting . . . fires the guns . . . and detects ground units . . . plus providing light and heat for the crews . . . and power for radio and intercom phones. Dependable ignition is paramount in this small but most vital engine. Dependable Champion Spark Plugs here, as in hundreds of other vital wartime assignments, are adding new prestige to their reputation for better performance and greater dependability, in every engine. Champion Spark Plug Company, Toledo 1, Ohio.

Buy Bonds "Bigger Bonds for the Mighty Seventh"

Andover Auxiliary Power Unit as used in the B-29. Built by Andover Motors Corporation, and the Ranger Aircraft Engine Division of the Fairchild Engine and Airplane Corporation.

TO SAVE GASOLINE —KEEP SPARK PLUGS CLEAN

When summer sun and wind "BEDEVIL" Your hair

...leaving it wild, unruly—hard to handle

TAKIN' A BEATIN': What a tangled, frowzled mess his hair is after working hours in the garden. Baked by the sun, blown by the wind — so hard to comb — stiff and wild looking.

HEADIN' FOR TROUBLE: After such a day's work — a cool plunge is *aces*. But what a sight his hair looks after grooming it with water — so stringy and unruly after it dries. What a shame he doesn't know how Kreml keeps hair so *neatly* in place.

NO WONDER GIRLS LAUGH: How silly his hair looks plastered down with grease! Kreml grooms "bedeviled hair" so handsomely without ever looking glued down or greasy.

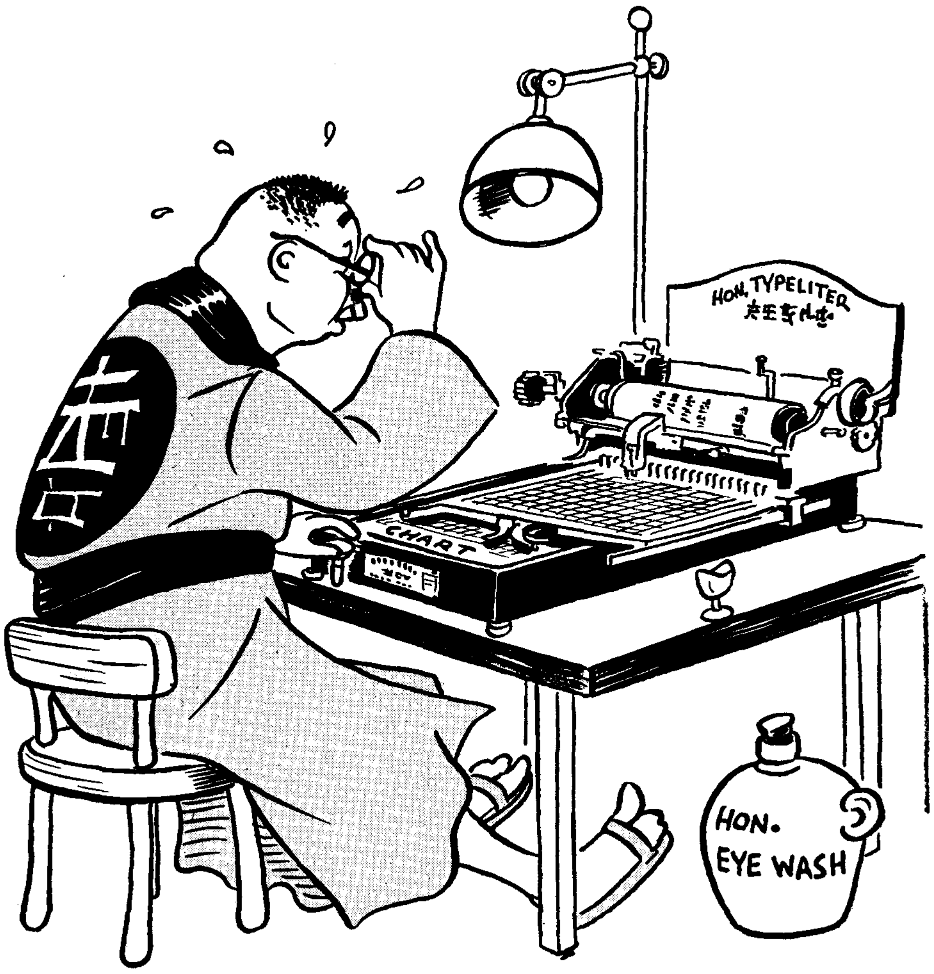
WHAT A DIFFERENCE: In his appearance and in his rating with the girls after he began using Kreml! He found Kreml just the "right-balance" dressing for his hair —"just right" to make his hair easy to comb—to look neatly groomed.

In hot summer months many men find it particularly difficult to keep their hair well groomed. That's one big reason why Kreml Hair Tonic is such a nationwide favorite! Kreml makes hair a *pleasure* to comb. It keeps it handsomely groomed — never looking or feeling greasy or dirty. Kreml also promptly relieves itching of dry scalp and removes untidy dandruff flakes. Ask for Kreml at your barber's. Buy Kreml at any drug counter. Use daily as directed.

Guaranteed by Good Housekeeping

KREML HAIR TONIC

Keeps Hair Better-Groomed Without Looking Greasy
Relieves Itching of Dry Scalp—Removes Dandruff Flakes



Keep up with the world

by Freling Foster

Japanese typewriters are so intricate and cumbersome that they are used, not to compose, but to copy letters and manuscripts, their only speed value being in their production of carbon copies. They contain 2,450 characters—nearly 2,300 Chinese ideographs, 102 Japanese syllable signs, the 52 small and capital letters of the English alphabet and the Arabic numerals. As even experienced operators have difficulty in finding these characters, a printed guide to their location is supplied with each machine.

About six dead languages, although long discovered, still defy translation, among them being the writings of the ancient Cretans, Etruscans and Easter Islanders.

When an idle gyrocompass is cleaned and its axis is accidentally moved to the east or west and not readjusted, the device requires some time to return to its normal position because it is influenced only by the rotation of the earth. For example, a gyrocompass that has a speed of 6,000 revolutions a minute and is 32 degrees off when its motor is started again, takes three hours to re-establish its true north direction.

A new company in Chicago sells unbaked pies, cookies and other pastries in frozen form, so they may be served oven-fresh when needed, without preparing them.

Under favorable conditions, the average plane whose engines have gone dead is able to glide a distance seven times its altitude, or four miles when flying at 3,000 feet.—*By Mary Kidston, Centreville, Nova Scotia.*

One of the largest engineering jobs done by the U.S. Army during this war was the building of the recently completed Ledo Road, which makes possible again highway transportation between India and China. No small part of the undertaking was the construction of 165 bridges, an average of one every three miles.

Of every 1,000 male and female prenatal deaths, 6 occur in the second month of pregnancy, 21 in the third, 49 in the fourth, 89 in the fifth, 117 in the sixth, 154 in the seventh, 240 in the eighth and 324 in the ninth month.

Polluted water can now be sterilized in large quantities, without the use of chlorine, by treating it electrolytically with silver, or by the flow of a weak direct current between two silver plates. By this method, one part of silver kills all bacteria in 100,000,000 parts of water within a few minutes.

Surgical operations on the human heart, usually fatal until a short time ago, are numerous and successful today. For instance, one American Army physician stationed abroad has removed so far in this war foreign bodies from the hearts of more than 325 soldiers without a single fatality.

Unlike the longer waves of radio, the ultrashort waves of television are not reflected back to the earth and, consequently, are not normally received beyond the horizon. But like light rays, they are refracted or bent to a certain extent by the different densities of the atmosphere. An unusual refraction of this kind occurs when Station WNBT in New York beams a television program to WRGB in Schenectady. The waves leave the transmitter atop the Empire State Building at an elevation of 1,250 feet and reach the level of the ground at the horizon 43 miles away where the denser air bends them downward so much that they can be picked up by the WRGB antenna which is 86 miles farther and 3,000 feet below that horizon.

A new pencil contains a miniature counter that records the number of words by a slight pressure on its point as each one is written.

Ten dollars will be paid for each fact accepted for this column. Contributions must be accompanied by their source of information. Address Keep Up with the World, Collier's, 250 Park Ave., New York (17), N. Y. This column is copyrighted, and none of its items may be reproduced without written permission

With Radio by General Electric—you hear the tones in all their "natural color" and beauty, virtually free from static, fading and station interference.

Conventional Radio—lacks color and richness. Something is missing.

DINAH SHORE, *star of* ***OPEN HOUSE,*** *Thursday nights, NBC.*

Exciting new beauty—Dinah Shore singing in natural color on a great new radio

One great day an entirely new kind of radio will bring Dinah's voice in all its original glowing beauty—every thrilling note crystal clear and richly rounded.

Never such glorious tone before

This is "natural color" music as you'll hear it on the great new General Electric FM radio—unbelievably free from static, fading and station interference. It's entirely new and infinitely finer than any radio you have ever heard before!

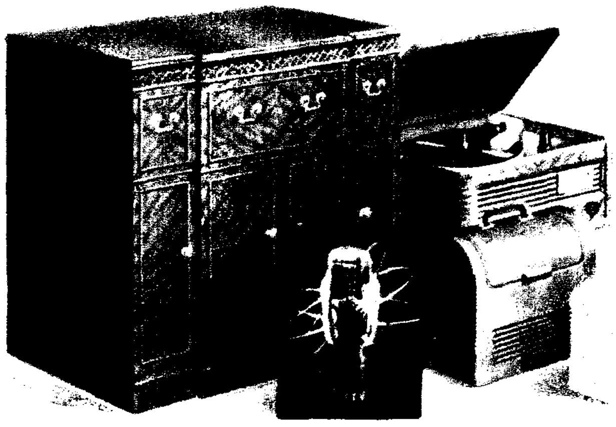
Everything in radio and television

This newest kind of radio is only one of the amazing models General Electric will offer at popular prices after the war. There also will be standard radios, radio-phonographs with a startling new system of tone reproduction, and the new revolutionary self-charging portable.

General Electric television receivers, too, with their large clear pictures, will set an entirely new standard in home entertainment.

FREE: A fascinating booklet, "YOUR COMING RADIO." 28 pages—handsomely illustrated in full color. A forecast of what radios—radio-phonographs and television receivers will be like after the war. For your free copy mail a postcard with the title, "YOUR COMING RADIO" and your name and address to Electronics Department, General Electric, Schenectady, N. Y.

Hear the G-E radio programs: *"The World Today" news, Monday through Friday, 6:45 p.m., EWT, CBS. "The G-E All-Girl Orchestra," Sunday 10 p.m., EWT, NBC. "The G-E House Party," Monday through Friday, 4 p.m., EWT, CBS.*



For long life and better reception ask for electronic radio tubes by General Electric

GENERAL ELECTRIC

170-D6

LEADER IN RADIO, TELEVISION AND ELECTRONICS

RADIOS

Mother's Dream Man is Father —

wearing a *Woman-Wise** sport shirt!

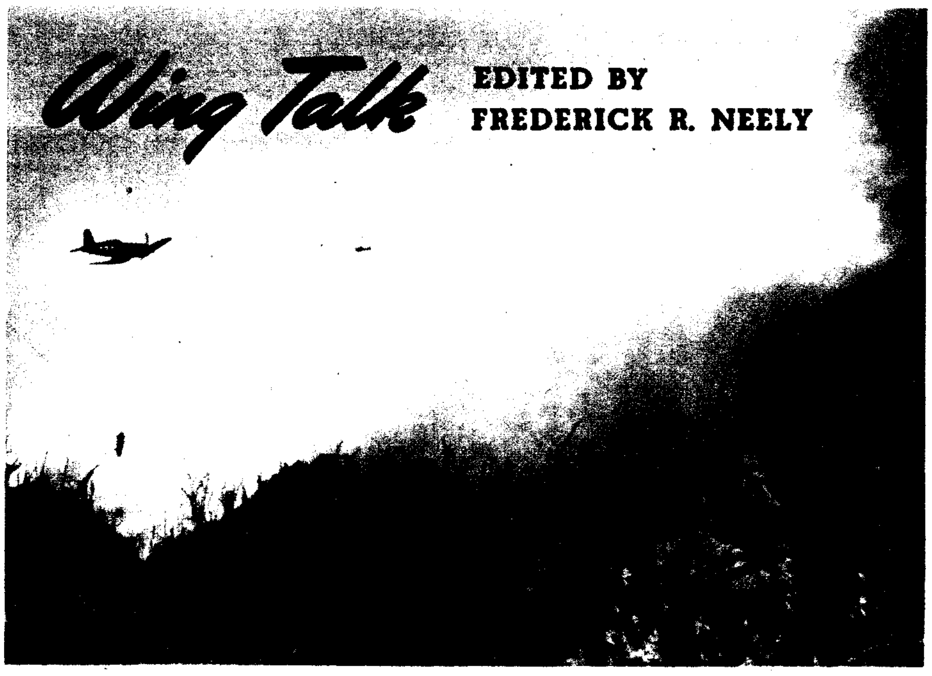
Tops with Dad, these bright Essleys! Tops with Mom too, because of the way they're styled (by America's leading men's fashion authority). Tailored by master craftsmen to make a man look his best in a woman's eyes. That's why Essleys are called *Woman-Wise!* Perfect gifts for Father's Day. Essley Shirt Company, Empire State Bldg., N. Y.

*ESSLEY Woman-Wise SPORTSWEAR

BY THE MAKERS OF ESSLEY *Woman-Wise* SHIRTS

Wing Talk

EDITED BY
FREDERICK R. NEELY



OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH U.S. MARINE CORPS

Fire bombs drop on Jap cave positions in Peleliu's Dead Man's Gulch, by courtesy of Death Dealers Squadron of the flying Marine flame-throwers

FIRE bombs are the hottest things this side of hell. The Japs learned that on March 10th when three hundred B-29s dropped some 2,300 tons of the hot stuff on Tokyo and then two days later, in a spectacular raid, turned five square miles of the city of Nagoya into a sea of flames.

Until these devastating raids were made on the Japanese homeland, military security prevented reports on results of our fire-bomb raids. Now it is possible to tell one of the more dramatic fire-bomb stories: how, on the battered little island of Peleliu, Marine fighter-bombers were turned into flying flame-throwers for one of the most delicate pin-point bombing missions ever undertaken.

In eight days last October, on a section of Peleliu no bigger than a city block, the Death Dealers Squadron of the Second Marine Air Wing dropped more than 32,000 gallons of flaming gasoline on Jap cave positions and wiped them out.

The fire bombs dropped by the Superforts on Japan were not this kind, but a more intricate incendiary, nineteen inches long and weighing six and a half pounds.* They were released in clusters of fourteen to thirty-eight at a time.

Prior to the conquest of Iwo Jima, the island of Peleliu was known to Marines as "the Gibraltar of the Pacific." Marine officers who should know called the terrain the most formidable ever encountered out there. The area where the fighting bogged down was covered by a series of jagged ridges divided by deep fissures bottomed with thousands of needle-pointed stalagmites of limestone.

More than 700 caves were counted after the fighting. Each of these had numerous openings and firing ports. Some were protected by heavy steel doors. Others were four or five levels deep. Within this underground fortress, the Japs lived like troglodytes and fought with their usual *Bushido* fanaticism from this labyrinth that often defied our heaviest weapons at point-blank range.

IT WAS found that bombing did little good. The Japs, when far back in the caves, weren't seriously affected by concussion from the aerial bombs. Something else had to be tried.

Fire bombs had been dropped by Navy Hellcats on Saipan and by Army Thunderbolts on Tinian, but always far in front of the ground troops. Their main purpose was to burn the sugar-cane fields to deprive the enemy of cover. Never had fire bombs been dropped on pin-point areas surrounded by our own troops, until the Death Dealers Squadron went into action.

The fire bombs loaded into twenty Marine Corsair fighter planes were ordinary droppable auxiliary fuel tanks—belly tanks—filled with a mixture of aviation gasoline thickened to a sticky, raspberry-pink jell by the addition of a secret powder to pin down the intense heat of the burning fluid, which otherwise would vanish aloft in a fireball. They weighed over 1,000 pounds and contained 150 gallons of the mixture.

The first target assigned to the Death Dealers on Peleliu was tricky. It was a ridge about three hundred yards long. Pilots were told to try to hit the top of the ridge in such a manner that the flame from their bomb would whip around over the cliff face where many caves were located. The top of the ridge was not much more than ten feet wide. Among the Marines, the target area was known as "Dead Man's Gulch," or the "Slot."

WITH the "safe" area for dropping the fire bombs only 300 by 100 yards, it was small wonder that the Marines on the ground sweated while waiting for the air support. But the airmen were sweating, too. An error of three seconds on the pilot's part would put the bomb on our own lines; and in addition to that, the fire bombs were hot stuff to handle. The orders were: "If you can't get rid of your bomb, get off the island and hit the silk. Don't try to land with that stuff."

And there was one thing more. It was Friday the 13th.

Watching from a Grasshopper plane not far away from the target, I could see the Marines lying in their foxholes and behind their sandbag barricades, waiting. I could look back over the incredibly short distance to the airfield and see the Corsairs taxiing out to the line, ready to take off.

In a short time the first ship charged down the dusty strip and lifted into the air, tucking up its wheels and leaving the deadly fire-bomb belly tank plainly visible beneath it. Other planes rose and circled over the target for a final look-see before coming in on their run.

A control plane hovered in the air over the target ready to call the whole thing off if anything went wrong.

Finally the first ship came barreling in, doing better than 140 knots. It made a sharp banking turn and slid in over the target under 150 feet while the Japs in the caves opened up with everything they had. In the plane was Major Robert F. "Cowboy" Stoud of Fort Laramie, Wyoming, skipper of the Death Dealers, a Guadalcanal ace with six Jap planes to his credit. (He was killed in action several months later.)

When it looked as though Cowboy would scrape his Corsair's belly on the sharp-edged ridge, he slid his plane to one side and cut the fire bomb loose. The oval tank tumbled end over end through the air, hit on top of the ridge, skittered for half a second and burst. A wall of fire boiled down over the face of the cliff while hundreds of fiery balls rushed furiously out from the impact. At the same time a mass of thick, greasy smoke

(Continued on page 79)

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* For details of U.S. super fire bomb see Tokyo Calling Cards, Collier's, April 14, 1945.

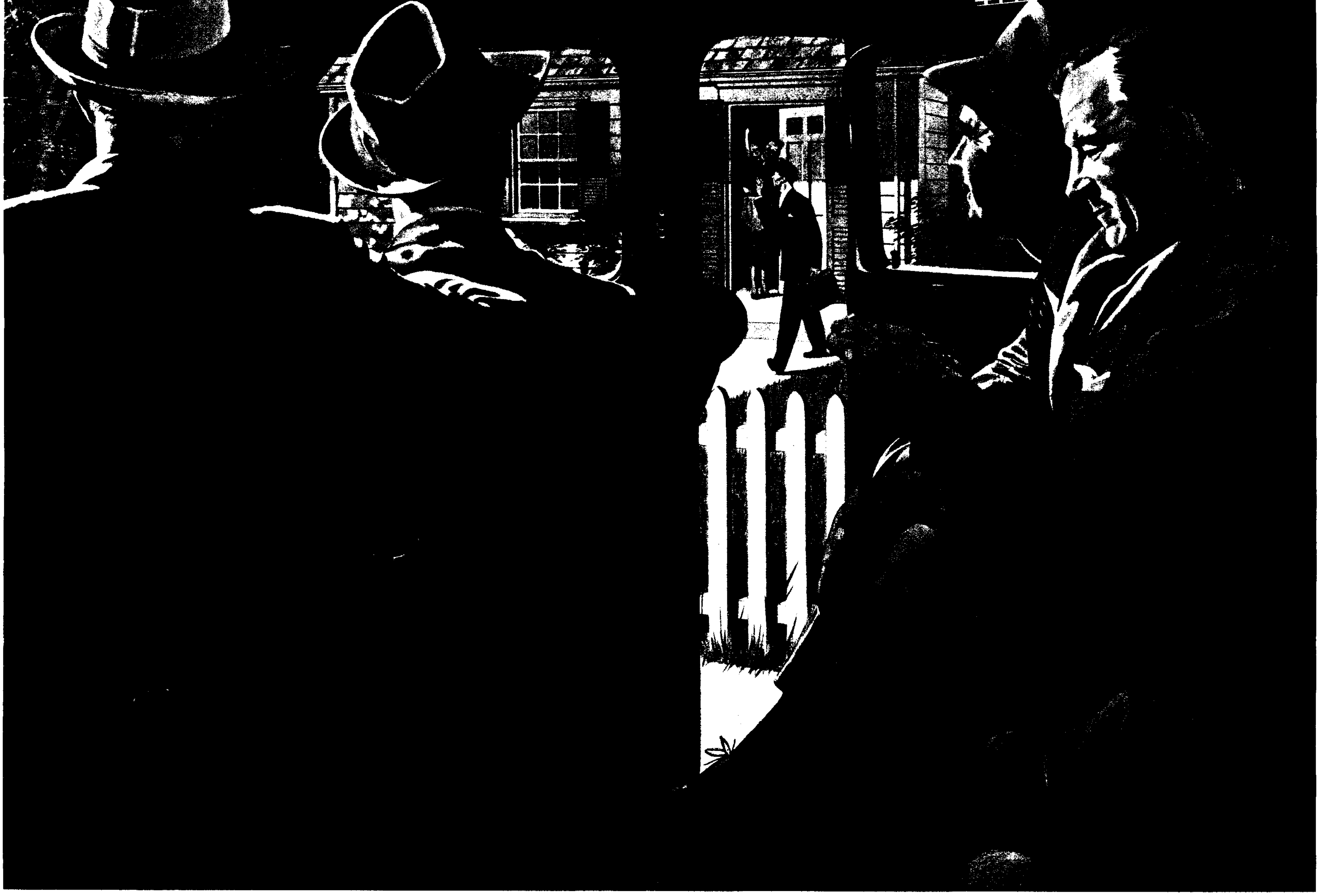
Remember when we told you—

"A Look at Plymouth is a Look Ahead"

A Look at Plymouth is a Look Ahead

Buy Wisely—BUY PLYMOUTH

THE CAR THAT STANDS UP BEST



Here's a report by George S. Plaisance of Birmingham, Ala., who looked ahead:

"In October, 1939, I purchased my second Plymouth sedan. As of this writing, the car has traveled 110,050 miles with a minimum amount of expense. No work was done on the engine — not even valve adjustment — until the speedometer had reached the 98,000-mile mark. The car still looks new. I use it to commute to the Alabama Ordnance Works, Childersburg, from my home in Birmingham, carrying five passengers six days a week."

Forward-looking Plymouth purchasers of the years before Pearl Harbor knew they were investing in long car life. They couldn't know *how long*. But now . . . as war year follows war year . . . and their cars keep rolling . . . they more than ever realize the *extra* durability built into Plymouth.

As Plymouth factories keep on pouring out tank, plane and gun assemblies, car owner testimony to Plymouth quality keeps on pouring in. The letters come from all parts of the nation . . . from farmers and war plant workers, fleet operators, doctors, contractors . . . people in almost every occupation. Above all, they praise Plymouth durability and reliability. And many pay tribute to the Plymouth dealer service that helps keep great cars running at their best.

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Could you tell him you're tired of buying WAR BONDS?

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COLLIER'S
THE NATIONAL WEEKLY
FOR JUNE 16, 1945

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TERROR *in* JAPAN

BY MARK GAYN

For ten consecutive days this spring, Japan got a furious foretaste of disaster. It found her unprepared. Here, from official sources, is a detailed report of what happened

ON a stormy morning last March, terror sneaked up on Japan. When it took its unhurried leave ten fearful days later, her people had had their first bitter foretaste of defeat. Up to then, it had been a remote and leisurely war. Here and there, in Japan's teeming cities, shelters were being built. Along some streets, shallow trenches had been dug. There had also been rehearsals, with some people pretending they were hurt, and others pretending they knew how to take care of the injured.

Of warnings there had been plenty. A dozen big raids had left ugly blotches on Japan's map. In February, an American task force had prowled dangerously along her coast. But mostly the attacks had been nuisance raids by lonely Superforts—250 of them in 216 forays in 120 days. Fear flew in on their wings, but the damage was slight and the fear evaporated.

Then, at midnight on March 10, 1945, a group of Superforts crossed Japan's coast line. Behind them came another group, and another in a line stretching far back toward Saipan. In a long, thin file they roared over Tokyo. They flew low, and out of their open bellies spilled bombs of jellied gasoline. When they hit, they burst, spewing out billowing, all-consuming fire. The flames leaped across fire lanes, swallowed factories, destroyed skyscrapers.

The last of the 300 Superforts left Tokyo at 2:40 A.M., but the fires blazed on for many hours, eating hungrily into the city's heart, with its war plants, department stores, railroad terminals, and the countless thousands of homes in which women and children were making the small parts and gadgets without which no modern war machine can function.

"The city burned like straw," said a Nazi eyewitness, in an intercepted message to Berlin. "Entire districts were burned down to the ground. As soon as the first incendiaries fell, the night was lighted up. The Superforts flew incredibly low above the spreading fires. One B-29 exploded almost over the very heart of Tokyo."

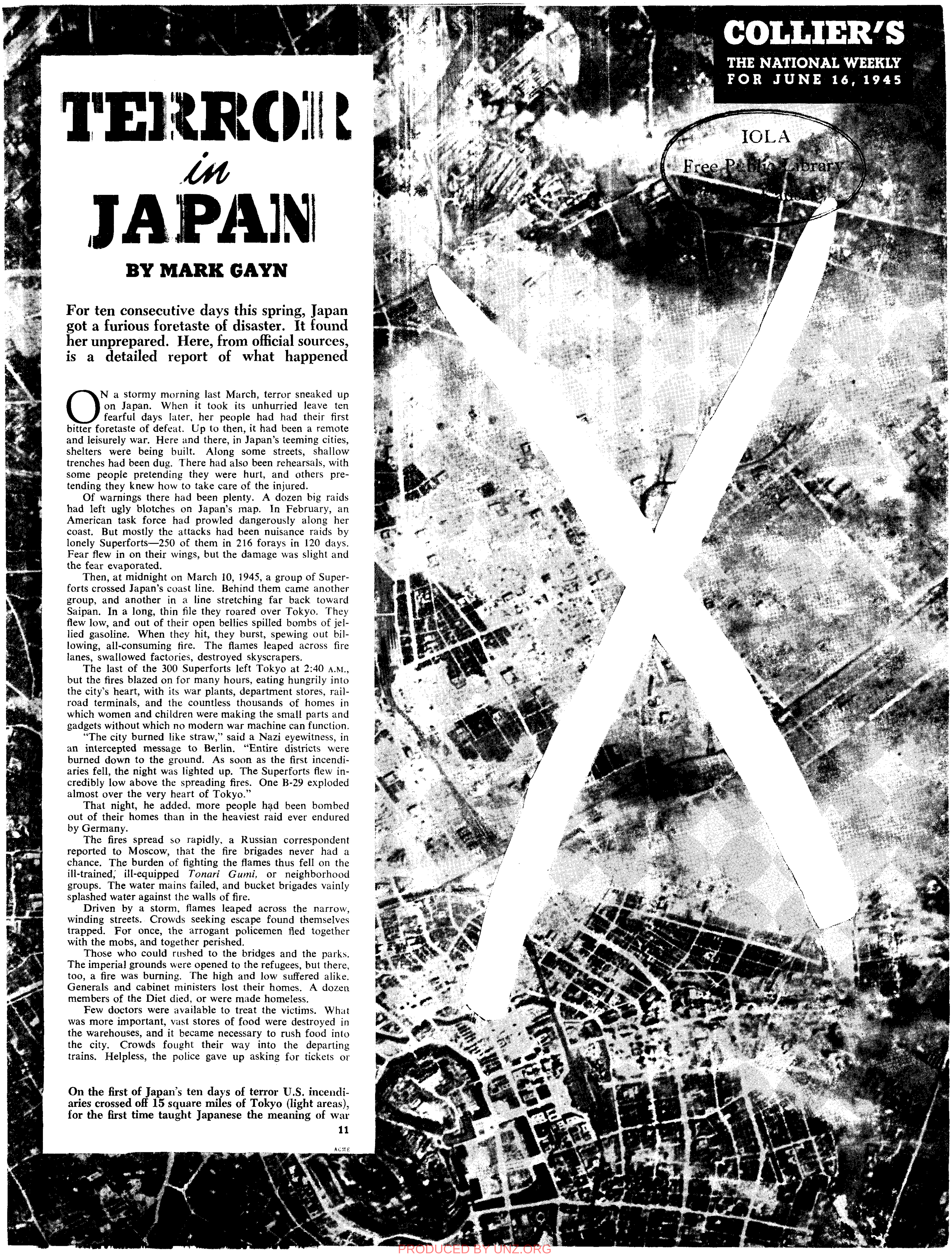
That night, he added, more people had been bombed out of their homes than in the heaviest raid ever endured by Germany.

The fires spread so rapidly, a Russian correspondent reported to Moscow, that the fire brigades never had a chance. The burden of fighting the flames thus fell on the ill-trained, ill-equipped *Tonari Gumi,* or neighborhood groups. The water mains failed, and bucket brigades vainly splashed water against the walls of fire.

Driven by a storm, flames leaped across the narrow, winding streets. Crowds seeking escape found themselves trapped. For once, the arrogant policemen fled together with the mobs, and together perished.

Those who could rushed to the bridges and the parks. The imperial grounds were opened to the refugees, but there, too, a fire was burning. The high and low suffered alike. Generals and cabinet ministers lost their homes. A dozen members of the Diet died, or were made homeless.

Few doctors were available to treat the victims. What was more important, vast stores of food were destroyed in the warehouses, and it became necessary to rush food into the city. Crowds fought their way into the departing trains. Helpless, the police gave up asking for tickets or



On the first of Japan's ten days of terror U.S. incendiaries crossed off 15 square miles of Tokyo (light areas), for the first time taught Japanese the meaning of war

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travel permits. The exodus went on for days, for even those whose homes survived now wanted to flee. Before the ten days were done, three million people of Tokyo's seven million joined the flight.

Long lines stretched before first-aid stations and hospitals. Community kitchens were set up in the blackened streets. With many public bathhouses burned down, private homes were compelled to open their bathrooms to the refugees. So many people had lost their ration books that after the early days of confusion, food was issued stamp-free to the victims. Evacuees were given five days rations.

On the roads leading from Tokyo, evacuees streamed out, on foot or bicycle. In the neighboring areas, officials sought empty barns, stocked up food, made arrangements to put the refugees to work in war factories.

Until their damaged plants could be repaired, the five Tokyo newspapers issued a joint daily. In it, men found orders, pleas to be calm, bitter abuse heaped on the American "savages and barbarians."

Embers were still hot on the ground when the Cabinet met to consider relief and defense. Before it dispersed, it had, in the typical way of Japanese bureaucracy, created a handful of committees with high-sounding if vague titles.

In the Diet that day, the Premier dodged charges of inefficiency by angry members bombed out of their homes. "The people are very much concerned," cried the members. "Have any steps been taken in regard to food? Will firemen be released from the army?"

Unhappily, the Premier pleaded guilty. "The people are caught in a feeling of restlessness and anxiety. . . . A plan will soon be made public. . . . The people will be asked to conform. . . ."

The wheels of government were beginning to turn again. The post office announced it would carry only short messages from the raid victims to their friends and relatives. What food stocks remained in the city were hastily dispersed, in fear of another raid. A "National Defense Mobile Bicycle Repair Shop" had gone into action.

Transportation remained disorganized. Repair crews worked on burned-out stations and twisted tracks. Express trains had been canceled. In their stead, all passenger cars were mobilized to move evacuees. Freight trains were doing double duty, taking out war plants and bringing in food. Because of transportation snags, the cigarette ration had been cut from seven a day to three. ("The best thing is to stop smoking altogether," said the Tokyo radio.)

Belatedly, government experts announced that 3,000 new air-raid shelters would be built in Tokyo. "Model shelters" for individual families were put on display, but for lack of nails and wood, the people were told to use salvaged building material.

In fear of raids it knew would come soon, the government charted 100 new firebreaks, 160 to 650 feet wide, around factories and railroad stations. Special agents then chalked the single, ominous word "Evacuate" on tens of thousands of doomed one-story matchwood buildings, and their residents were told to move out. Once the houses were vacated, thick ropes were put around their supports, and tractors or teams of men pulled the buildings down.

The Emperor Views the Ruins

On the morning of the eighth day, the emperor expressed a desire to see the damage. This had happened only twice since the great earthquake of 1923, and the Japanese propaganda machine took care to publicize it. With his retinue, the emperor spent an hour in the damaged area.

Wherever he went, the people knelt before him in the rubble and apologized for "causing him anxiety" and thanked him for "taking compassion on the privations of his subjects." A multimillionaire many times over, he had given the victims ten million yen (about $2,300,000 at the prewar exchange rate), and the official news agency at once reported that "the people responded like scorched grass revived by seasonable rain."

The newspapers carried the emperor's picture under a banner headline. The nation's network carried a passionate speech by a famous commentator: "This evening my friend visited me. He opened a newspaper and told me to worship it. I looked at the gracious figure of His Imperial Majesty, and could not speak for a while. 'We're going to win. We are going to win for certain!' I shouted."

This was Tokyo, stunned and scorched. Briefly the eyes of Japan were on it. But Japan's terrible lesson was only beginning. On the night of March 11th, the Superforts returned to her skies, to attack Nagoya, where airplanes are made. On the 14th came the turn of Osaka—huge and ugly and busy making guns. On the 17th, neighboring Kobe, where men-of-war are built, was hit. By luck, Nagoya escaped much damage. Thus, on the night of the 19th, the Superforts were back, for a second, fiercer strike. It was as if New York, Chicago, Pittsburgh and Washington, D. C., had been devastated in a tragic ten-day period.

And as if that was not enough, the famed Task Force 58 sailed boldly to Japan's shores on March 18th. At 6 o'clock that morning, 1,400 carrier planes took off to blast airfields, factories and railroads. The following day, 1,100 planes returned to finish off the targets which still survived.

Now all Japan lay naked and in fear, and none bothered to conceal the hurt. "This," said her radio, "marks the outset of the war's final and grimmest phase."

"Nippon can take it!" boasted Tokyo. "National resolve is strengthened rather than weakened by the rain of death." But if the truth be told, her people and leaders took the blow with no greater moral strength than the hapless people of the lands she had devastated. There were fear and confusion. There were fumbling, charges, recriminations.

Seventy-one generals were reshuffled. The governor of Tokyo, an empire builder with a vicious record, was angrily assailed for talking to the Japanese the way he had earlier talked to the Chinese. Much too late, two billion yen was appropriated for air defense.

In all the big cities, the government urged the people to leave, but transportation was inadequate, and for many, there was no place to go. "There is no time to think of such things," said Tokyo sternly. "Walk if need be to the near-by prefectures. . . ."

And it had finally totaled up the losses of those fearful ten days. More than three million people, it reported, had been killed, injured or left homeless. More than three quarters of a million houses had been destroyed in four cities. Tokyo fared worst, with 510,000 buildings burned down or demolished, and 2,100,000 victims.

Nor was this the end. Before the ten days had ended, the sense of terror had been compounded by the loss of Iwo. The papers bravely called it a "moral victory" and spoke of its garrison joining the "army of ghosts" defending Japan. The terror was all the greater because it was superimposed against the background of wartime scarcity, shabbiness, exhaustion.

In the face of the blockade, Japan slashed the monthly rice ration from 30 to 20 pounds. (At the risk of a year in jail, many promptly rushed to claim "ghost relatives.") Fish, the second food staple of Japan, is scarce, and what there is of it is often rotten. The vegetable ration dropped to a pound a week.

But even this hungry diet is irregular. Graft, red tape, disrupted communications play havoc with distribution. One village has to stretch a two-week supply of rice over a month. A locality lives on tomatoes for a week. A prefecture (equivalent to one of our states) goes along without sugar for a month.

The people are hungry. Once the first animal fear is gone, food replaces even the air raids as the main topic of conversation, and the people's anger finds an echo even in the regimented press. Cries a daily: "One red radish is given each person in Tokyo every two days. This is probably enough for a horse, but too little for a human being." Another reports that 60 per cent of the children are undernourished, 30 per cent have

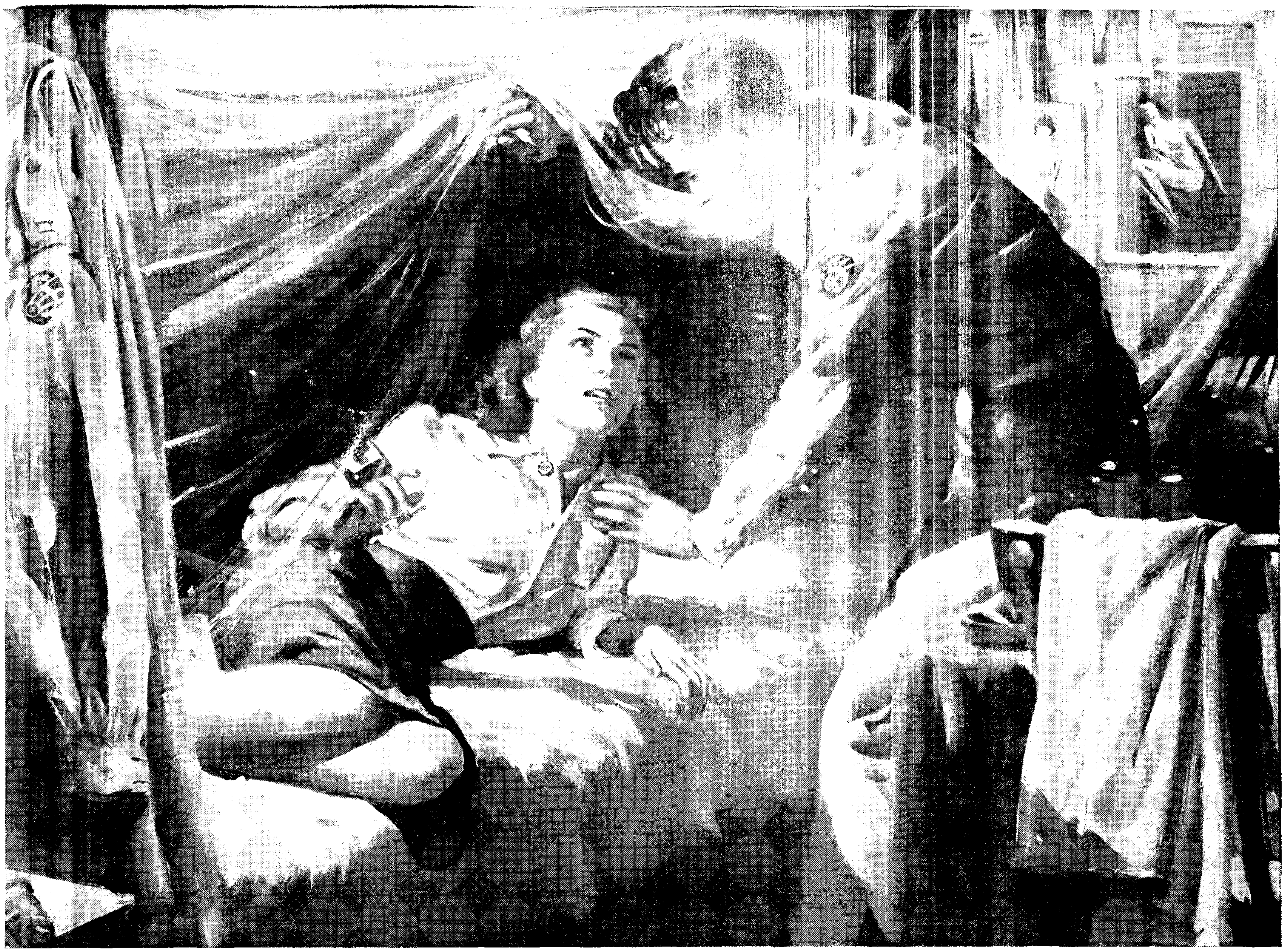
(Continued on page 59)

ON THE COVER

is General Brehon B. Somervell, chief of U.S. Army Service Forces. Having organized the titanic job of delivering the millions of troops, tanks, cigarettes, bridges, galoshes and howitzers to Army General Eisenhower on time, to beat the Germans, Somervell must now do the same job over supply lines nearly three times as long in order to produce final victory in the Far East. The number of separate things to be produced, packed, shipped, unpacked and put into final use is so astronomical that man's imagination cannot encompass it. But General Somervell's imagination must and, on the basis of the record, will

U.S. carrier-plane blows augmented the destruction by Army B-29s, piled chaos on disaster for Japanese. This shows an attack on an engine plant near Tokyo

OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH U.S. NAVY



Liz awakened with a start. "What is it?" she asked. "A crash boat got a pick-up call. It may be Bob," Jack said

[illegible]

A proposal is supposed to make a girl happy, but when Jack asked Liz to marry him, she could not escape a strange, foreboding sadness

By Max Hampton

THEY were being married in the Quonset hut that served as the officers' mess of the Heavy Bomb Squadron. Darkness was coming in in that sudden way of the tropics. The fronds of the palm shoots scraped against the screen. Outside there was the clatter of mess kits of the men and the shouts and laughter of the crowd in the open-air shower. Inside the hut there was almost no noise. The only record they had been able to find that half suited the occasion was a warped Vienna Woods. The old machine they played it on protested in grunts when it was wound.

Padre, the Group chaplain, was standing in front of the altar built of belly-tank crates covered with an old parachute. There were bunches of green, pulled from the jungle, stuck about. Fellows who hadn't had to fly were all there, wearing their cleanest, least wrinkled khakis. They had blitzed their wings and buckles and fished their low-cut shoes from the bottoms of their lockers and given them glassy shines. The place smelled to the corrugated metal roof of the food Bandy, the mess sergeant, had fixed for the dinner.

Bob and Liz took their places in front of Padre. Vienna Woods scratched the silence. Padre began to speak, his low voice carrying to each corner. One of Liz's Red Cross friends started to cry. She was a plump little thing with a shiny, sunburned nose. Grace, her name was. Doc, the flight surgeon, was watching Bob very closely. Doc hadn't wanted to release Bob from the hospital for the wedding. He hadn't given in until noon of that day.

Bob was pale under his tan, and a little shaky, but the bandage on his head was at a jaunty tilt—just as he wore his flight cap and just as he probably wore his pork pie or Homburg at home. He was standing straight as a cadet at inspection, his eyes on Padre's face. Liz held his arm very tightly. She knew how ill he had been. She was one of the few people who had seen him when they unloaded him from the crash boat into the ambulance at the dock.

Liz wore a dress as white as the folds of the parachute cloth on the altar. She was carrying a spray of wild butterfly orchids that grew down by the river not far from the hospital where she was stationed. That silky hair of hers caught the light as she stood at Bob's side. She came just to his shoulder.

Since no one "stood up" with Bob, Liz had not asked any of her Red Cross friends to stand with her. Jack, of course, should have been there to stand at Bob's side. But Jack was gone. It was just as well, actually; he had been very much in love with Liz, too. He had left a bottle of Scotch with Skinny Farnsworth as his present to the wedding couple. It was a bottle that Jack had treasured for over a year. "Tell them they can use this for something old. Twelve years ought to be old enough—in these troubled times."

Pete Larsen was trying to be quiet about winding the phonograph. The music started again, the dipping, swooping rhythm of the waltz. Padre was calling her Elizabeth; saying "—this man Robert."

The last light had left the sky now. The breeze was already cooler. Soon the wedding would be over, and Liz would be gone. So, for that matter, would the squadron. A lot had happened in a little while. But it only takes a little while in a war. Only four months, it had been, since Doc had brought Liz to the mess hall for the first time. . . .

THE officers had already begun to eat that first night when Doc walked in with Liz. The mess was a noisy place. A crowd of pilots in a small room can simulate the sounds of the beginning of a mob fight. Everyone spotted the doc and Liz at the same time. The mess was suddenly so quiet you could hear the breathing.

Liz Kelly was thin, with large brown eyes and sunbleached brown hair that was so soft and shining that men wished they might put their hands on it to feel it slip silkily under their palms. Her skin was the color of polished light wood catching the sun. Her face was thin and she wore her short hair brushed back from the temples. She was the first Red Cross girl they had seen since moving up.

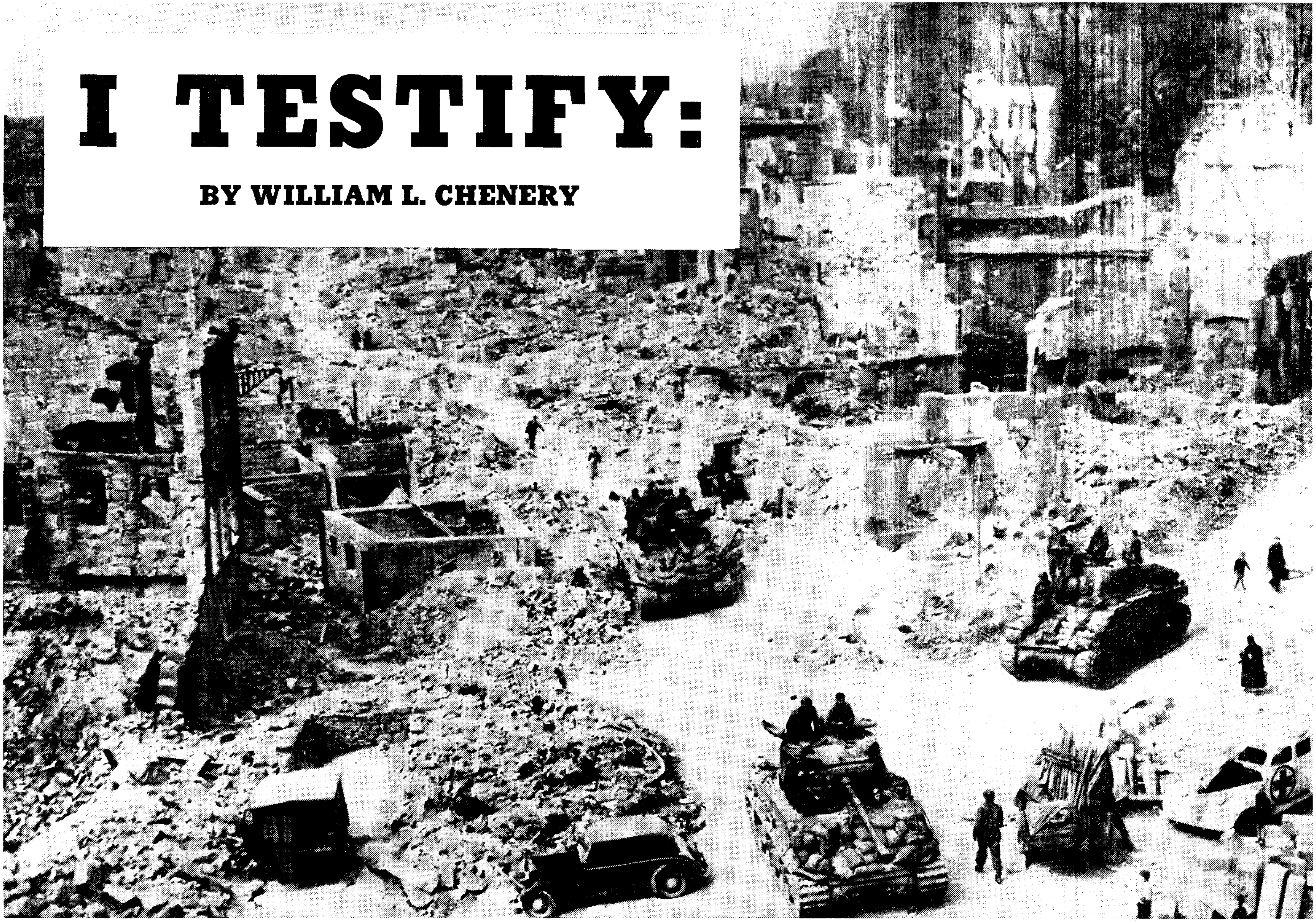
Both she and the doc stopped right at the door as though the sudden silence had jerked them to a standstill. The doc's sandy eyebrows went up in question as they did when he came across something in an

(Continued on page 74)

ILLUSTRATED BY WENDELL KLING

I TESTIFY:

BY WILLIAM L. CHENERY



ACME

Wreckage of Nuremberg, once a shrine of Nazism, illustrates the material disintegration of Germany and poses the problem of what to do with an unrepentant Reich

Industrially and morally, Germany has been destroyed, but here is a vivid reminder by an actual eyewitness that we will have to be forever on guard

CAMILLE HUYSMANS, the veteran burgomaster of Antwerp, when asked, "What should be done to German industry?" replied crisply: "The tense is wrong. Already it has been done. German industry no longer exists."

For the moment, that is an accurate statement. It may continue to be true unless American dollars rebuild it. We are not in the mood to do that now. Until it is done or permitted, the fear of Germany need not disturb the minds of the peace-loving peoples of the world.

We will not be in the mood to rebuild German industry for a long time to come if we remember what it has been possible to see in Germany since the conquering Allied armies pushed back the Nazis.

You remember pictures of the German concentration camps for political prisoners. Many have seen them. And a very good thing, too, to see and to remember. What you saw in the news illustration or the movie theater was not exaggerated. I have visited these camps and I have seen the prisoners and the conditions under which they existed or died. It would be hard, with a mere camera, to overstate the essential horror of these camps. What can the civilized men of the victorious powers do to prevent a repetition of these horrors? If we want to get a practical answer, we had best get a clear picture of what occurred and of why it came to pass. Regard first the simple facts.

General Dwight Eisenhower is a strong man and a soldier. He is familiar with the grim realities and the bloody sacrifice of war. Yet he could hardly believe the reports brought to him by his own officers when the first of the concentration camps was captured by his American troops. So he looked for himself. What he saw persuaded him to ask General George Marshall to invite a delegation from Congress and a group of American editors and publishers to come and see for themselves. General Eisenhower thought it important both now and in the future to have firsthand testimony of detached witnesses who were in no way involved in propaganda.

So journalists and congressmen alike had the opportunity to observe and to question prisoners and all others available in the concentration camps. As one of the journalists, I saw the dead men and the dying and, more pitiful still, the literal thousands of broken men doomed by their experiences to incomplete recovery, if they survive at all.

We saw the prisoners and we observed the barracks and the yards in which these captives were crowded, starved and beaten. Cruelties, unmatched perhaps in hundreds of years, were inflicted upon many. Some of the imprisoned men represented the best ideas and the most generous ideals of Europe.

I remember a Dutch Jesuit priest, Father Peter van Gestel, who said he had been imprisoned at Dachau since 1942. A magnificent figure, Father van Gestel was arrested in Holland in 1941 because he denounced Nazi principles in sermons. Two thousand four hundred other priests and Protestant clergymen were imprisoned in the same camp.

Some of them were German, Pastor Niemoeller among them. All were charged with an unwillingness to accept and preach Nazi doctrines which were a denial of the teachings of Christ.

For this they were subjected to punishments and humiliation almost beyond the comprehension of modern men. Father van Gestel survived because of his unusual vigor, but he looks fifteen years older than the 47 years he actually has lived. The tall, gray Jesuit is still a noble figure, and his mind discriminates between what the Nazis did to their victims and what was not done.

"No, the German priests did not have to work until after Easter, 1942," he said. "Then they were compelled to work in the fields. They arose at 4 A.M. and worked until 7 P.M. The Polish priests were used as test animals in medical experimentation. One hundred and seventy of them were infected with malaria to test the efficacy of certain antimalarial drugs. . . . Yes, many of them died. Others had recurrent high fevers. Altogether more than a thousand priests and clergymen died of undernourishment and disease. . . . Yes, the Nazis put German Communists in charge of the priests. That was one of their tricks, using prisoners to make other prisoners miserable. Doctor Schacht was here. So was Leon Blum. So was Chancellor Schuschnigg. They were taken away last week. Himmler's order was: 'There must be no question of a prisoner falling into the hands of the enemy.' So all records were destroyed in the last three weeks."

Deaths by "Natural" Causes

Colonel George J. Hathaway, the United States Army medical officer in charge of Dachau, said that he was able to get records only from the prison physicians who were themselves prisoners. "But," said Colonel Hathaway, "the prisoner physicians are men of high caliber. As I have seen it, their records are accurate."

Doctor Franta Mis, a distinguished Hungarian physician, spokesman of the captive doctors, also imprisoned for their opinions, was obviously a man of ability and character. Despite the difficulty and danger, he and his associates kept records. From their records Colonel Hathaway was able to inform us that from 1933 through 1942 there were 34,000 natural deaths at Dachau out of a total prison population during those years of 125,000. That was roughly 27 per cent, although when they came to the concentration camp, these prisoners were vigorous enough to be regarded as dangerous enemies by the Nazis. During 1943 there were 1,596 deaths. During 1944 a total of 4,805 died. From January this year until the camp was captured by the Americans at the end of April, 13,159 men died. The day before, we arrived on May 3d, 146 men died in the camp hospital and 44 in the barracks.

This rise in deaths was due to starvation and typhus. Remember this was a camp for interned political prisoners. Hitler's own finance minister, Doctor Schacht, as well as Marshal Stalin's stepson and the last Austrian chancellor Doctor Schuschnigg and others of similar character were there. Most of these eminent men survived but nowhere since the Dark Ages has death been a more frequent visitor than at Dachau during the twelve years of Nazi rule.

At the end, while the Russian armies were marching in from the east and the Americans were rushing from the west, trainloads of political and racial prisoners from other camps were sent toward Dachau. When the trains arrived, most of these prisoners were dead from exposure and starvation. The dead were still there when we arrived.

It is not a pretty sight to see—as I did—a long line of freight cars, gondolas and boxcars filled with dead men. Freight cars and third-class passenger coaches stood on the curving railroad track further than I could see. Only after I looked steadily could I comprehend the reality that these piles of white flesh gleaming in the sunlight were actually dead men, or that the objects scattered along the track were all that was left of men who once had hope and ambition and a sense of right even as we who were called to look upon them after their agony had passed. I fancy no other generation was ever required to witness horror in this particular shape. All this and many other terrors occurred in beautiful country not a dozen miles from Munich which was, until the Nazis came, one of the most gracious cities in the world.

Life within these prison camps, as it is possible now to reconstruct it from the testimony

(Continued on page 28)

One Love in a Lifetime

By Louise Roedocker

IT WAS wonderful to be home again. I had been called away two months before when my mother was taken seriously ill with pneumonia, and now I went around pulling the blinds, letting the sun stream in like a pile of gold coins on the rugs, running my fingers along the dull bronze of the love seat, going into the bedroom and opening the closet to feel Alan's rough tweed clothes. I was taking a deep whiff of the good home smell when the telephone rang. I stood a moment, not wanting to answer it, wondering lazily who it could be.

"Hello, darling." It was Alice Johnson. There was no mistaking that petulant tone. "You are home, then. I called just on the chance. After all, I thought it was about time—if you were coming at all."

Alice is the innuendo type, so I said something about having to stay until I was sure my mother was all right, and then she broke in: "We've all missed you so much. Alan most of all, I think."

"That's a way husbands have," I said dryly. "By the way, he's still missing me. I thought I'd surprise him by being here when he turned up tonight."

Silence from Alice. Then she said, "Oh. . . ."

Alice can make whoever made a mountain out of a molehill look like a piker, so I said lightly, "What's the matter? Alan been stepping out on me?" That was supposed to be funny. Alan and I have been married eight years and we're still madly in love with each other.

"Well," she said, as if she were just ready to do a dive into Niagara Falls, "as a matter of fact, he has. Oh, Dorrie, I hate to tell you. But after all, it's better to hear it from a friend, isn't it?"

"Um-m-m," I muttered. "Let's get on with the gory details." I didn't believe she could supply any details. Alice sensed my lack of appreciation and rushed to the defense of her honor.

She was able to supply minute details. The girl was Kay Hammel, a relative of one of my friends, Phyllis Raley, and she was staying with the Raleys and working uptown. She was very beautiful and quite young, and Alan, the many times he had been seen with her, had seemed quite taken. Not that they did anything wrong, I was assured. Alan was just lonely, and a pretty girl. . . .

It just didn't fit in with my idea of Alan. After Alice hung up, I sat down and tried to figure it out. I had gone to high school with Alan; I knew his mother and his father. I knew that he had been brought up on ideas of the sanctity of the home, and of there being but one right person in the world, and that when you met that one person, you lived happily ever after. Alan with another woman. . . .

I REACHED for the telephone, dialed his office, waited for his secretary to get through to him.

"Hello, Alan," I said.

And then I heard his voice, and I knew that in some queer way nothing fitted at all, and that I didn't know Alan.

"Dorrie," he said very slowly, "I'll be right home," and the receiver went down with a little click.

Finally I left the phone and went and sat down on one of the green chairs. When I heard his key in the lock I gripped my hands tight on the edge of the chair, and then I made myself unclench them and spread them out nice and placid. I heard him open the front door, and then he was fumbling in the closet behind me, hanging up his coat and hat. He was a very long time about it.

Then he stood in front of me. I looked up at him, his reddish brown hair a little ruffled above his serious, good face, his mouth thinned out. Oh, Alan, I thought, and I wanted to cry. I began to hurt, really hurt, as if I'd poured a cup of scalding coffee all at once down my throat.

How we did it, I don't know. But all at once I was standing up, and Alan was running to me, and I was in his arms.

"Dorrie," he said, as if the sound were squeezed out of him, and he had his face against my neck and we were both crying.

He wasn't satisfied until he told me all about it. He said, "You know it wasn't serious, don't you? You know there's only you, always." He told me that she reminded him of me, and that's what had started it.

I can't say that helped much, but I wanted some explanation of how, after eight years of being singularly one-track minded, he could come to an intersection.

So I accepted it.

NOT without some trouble. I'd be dusting the knickknack shelf or vacuuming the rugs, and I'd suddenly have a picture of Alan's and Kay's heads close together at the movies, of their laughing together over the silly parts, their doing together all the things Alan and I did. I'd think: If only they had done something different, been wild, got drunk, anything.

Then I'd get out of the house and walk and walk. . . .

Once I was late getting back, and Alan was already home for dinner. He took one look at me and his face got white. He caught me up close, rubbing his cheek hard against mine, and then he held me off. "I didn't love her. Believe me, Dorrie. You know I couldn't be like that, don't you? You know that anything like that is against everything I've ever believed in, don't you?"

Yes, I knew. And I was beginning to think that I had made a lot of nothing when one night we found ourselves standing in front of Phyllis and Jake Raley in a restaurant line. Kay was with them.

We all got a table together, of course, and when we sat down, I glanced at Alan. His face was set, and he was staring down at his plate. I looked at Kay, and my heart beat faster—because she was beautiful, with lovely skin and dark auburn hair and white smooth arms. Right now she was looking at me curiously, a little guiltily. I felt sick.

"How does it feel to be back?" Jake asked me jovially.

"Oh, fine," I said. Yes, just fine. Everything was wonderful.

"We tried to keep Alan here from getting too bored," Phyllis said, smoothing her soft blond hair. "We did get him to take Kay out a few times. Knew you wouldn't mind."

Oh, no, I thought, I'm completely sophisticated. I don't care at all how many pretty girls he takes out. I managed to smile at Kay. "I hope he didn't fall asleep at the movies," I said. "He generally does with me."

Kay smiled, too, with relief. "It was fun," she said. "Too bad all the nice men are already married."

"There's no law that says you have to go out with them," Alan said, in the nastiest voice I've ever heard.

It was so unlike Alan that I turned to look at him. But he wasn't seeing any of us. He was staring off at a group of people sitting near by—just staring without seeing.

The waiter came up then, and before Jake could get his mouth open, Alan had given our orders. All, that is, except Kay's. He simply ignored her.

"Alan," I said quietly, "you've forgotten to give Kay's order."

Alan frowned, and made a great show of patience, not once glancing at Kay, who began quickly to talk about a new hat she had bought that day. "Just a simple black," she said, "but with tricky veiling."

"Must be going to a funeral," Alan muttered, looking away from our table again.

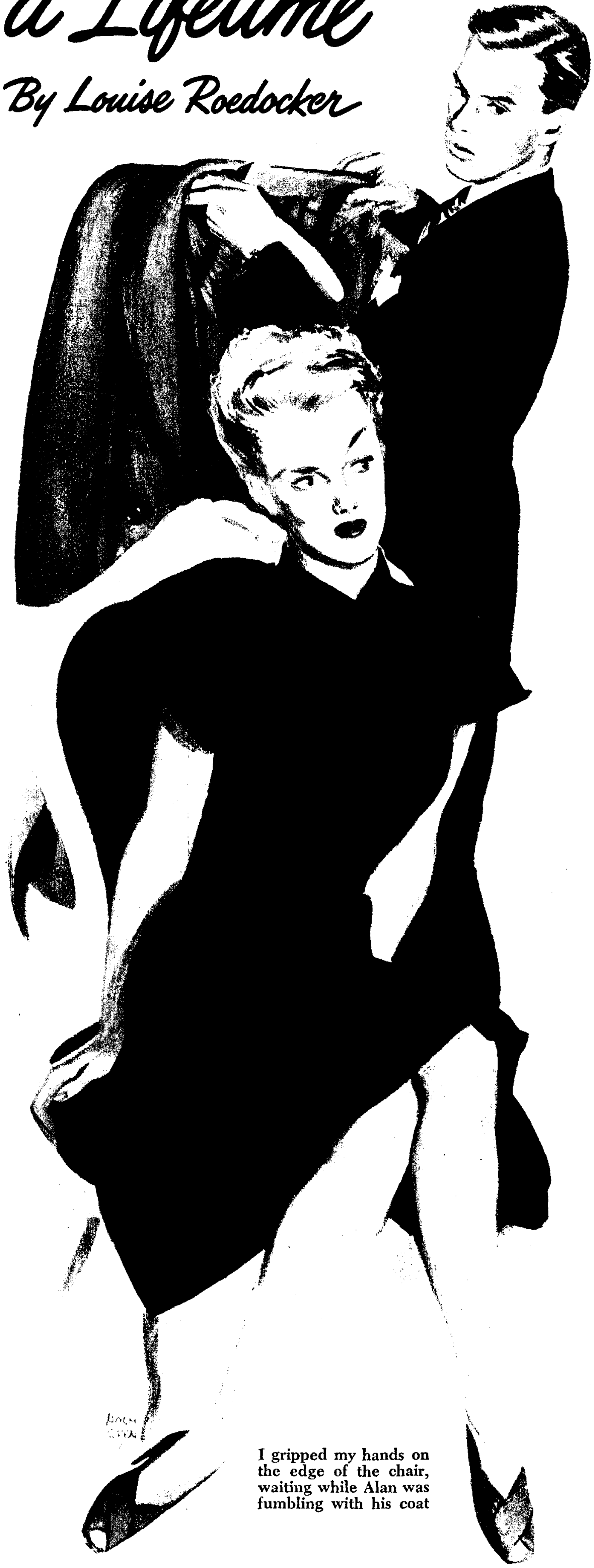
I SUPPOSE I should have seen the humor of the situation, but as time passed, it became less and less humorous. Alan kept making occasional pointed remarks. Later he didn't talk at all. Between him and Kay there grew up a tense, antagonistic silence, a silence that shut the rest of us out. I couldn't get through to Alan at all.

At last it was over. Kay walked off with the Raleys without a backward glance, and Alan and I walked stiffly on toward home. At our door he turned to me. His face relaxed for the first time that evening. He took my hand in his and squeezed it.

"You see," he said triumphantly, "I didn't care about her at all."

I didn't say anything. He believed it now, and, because that could be the only answer for me, perhaps someday I might believe it, too.

We opened the front door and went into our house.



I gripped my hands on the edge of the chair, waiting while Alan was fumbling with his coat

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN HOLMGREN

a short short story

complete on this page

OLD TOWN

BY DALE WHITE

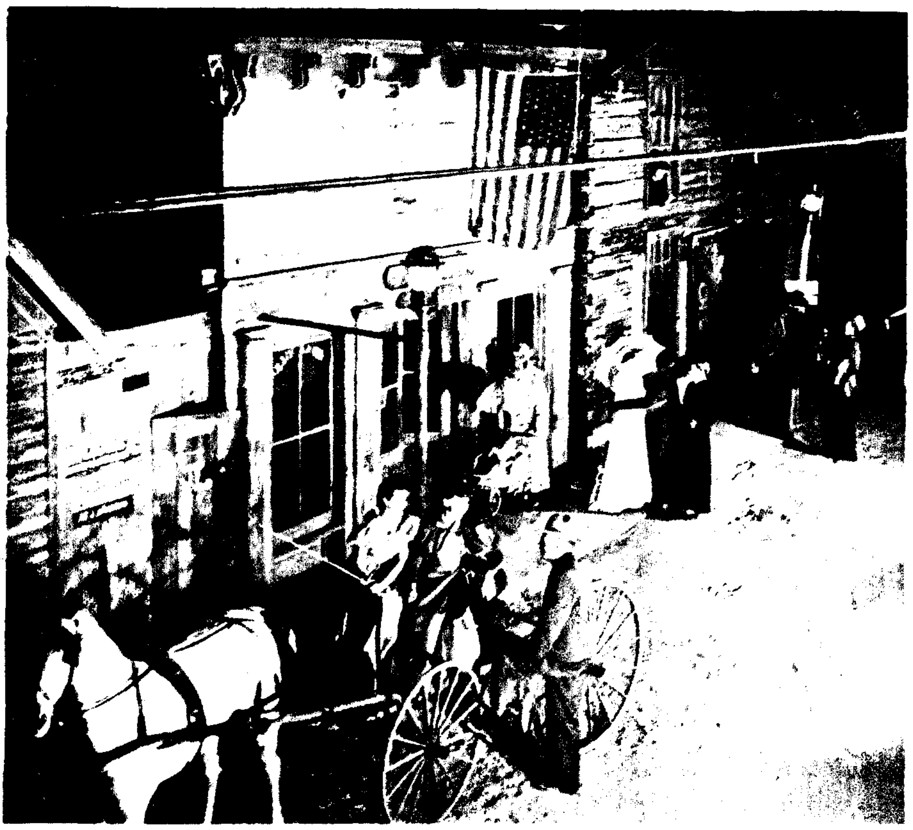
CHARLIE BOVEY, of Great Falls, Montana, is the mayor of a town which died some sixty years ago. He is also its founder, builder and chief benefactor. The town is his hobby; it is housed in a pavilion at the North Montana Fair Grounds, but it is absolutely authentic, complete to the last detail of furniture in its barbershop, hardware store, firehouse, dance hall.

The idea of building the town came to Bovey, a Minneapolis boy turned Montana rancher, after a visit to Henry Ford's Greenfield Village in 1937. Back home, he decided to collect old buggies and automobiles and cutters.

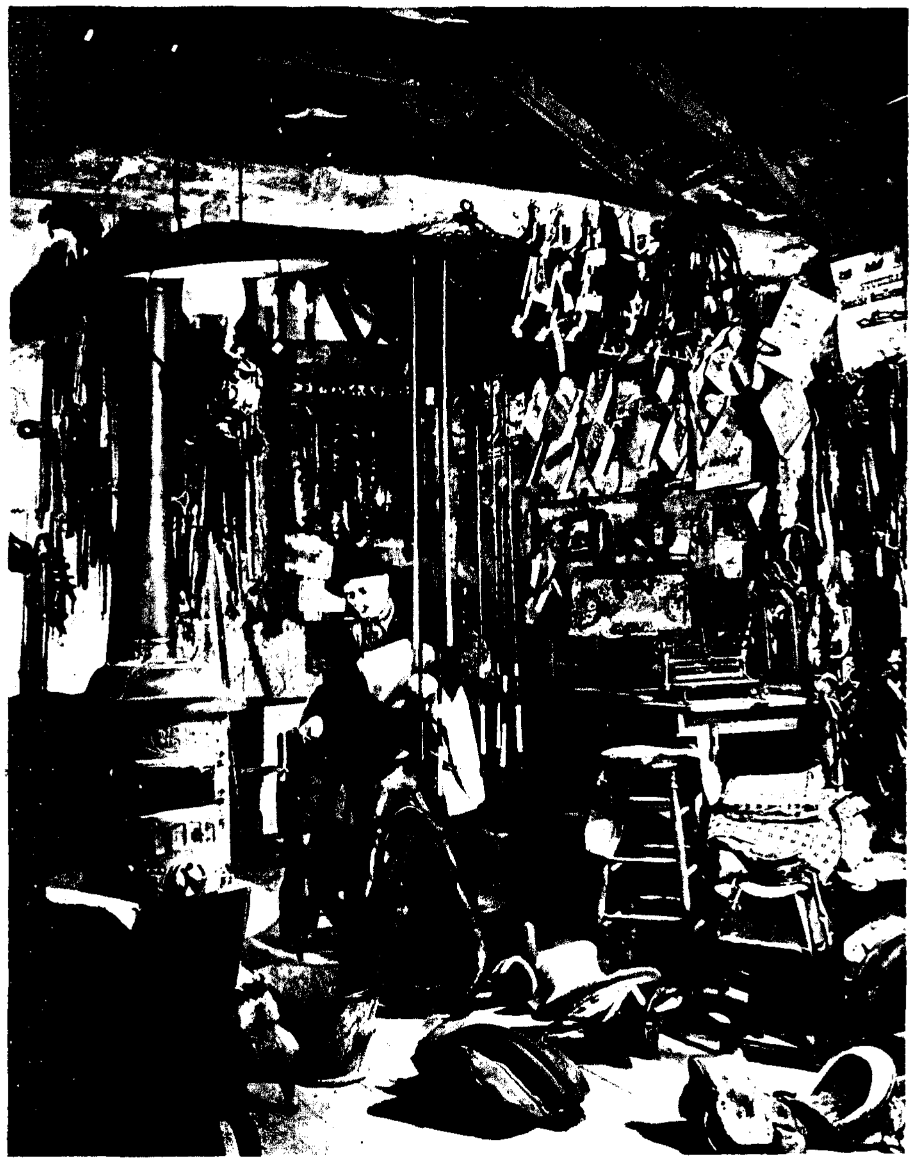
Then one day when he was in Elkhorn he saw the store front of the ancient Elkhorn Trading Company lying in the street. That seemed a shame to Bovey, so he started negotiations. A day or so later, he was trucking the knocked-down pieces of the store front and an entire vintage barbershop—complete to hand-carved, plush-seated chairs, a tin bathtub and a sign reading "Baths—25 cents weekdays, 75 cents Saturdays" back to Great Falls.

Since then he has added to the collection—a saloon, saddlery, hardware store, drugstore, newspaper shop, blacksmithy, "Joe's Lunch" and even an antique backhouse, reached by a door in a board fence which was always open. ★★★

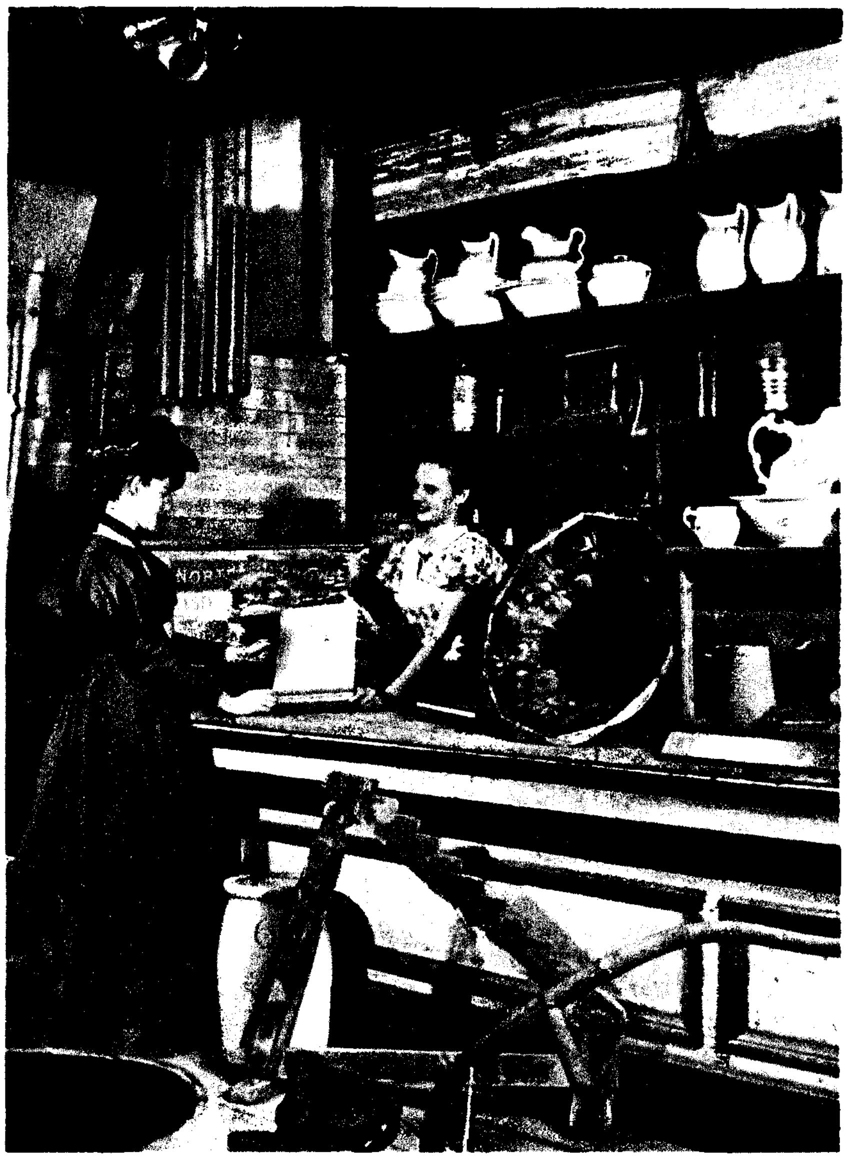
PHOTOGRAPHS FOR COLLIER'S BY H. J. KNOPF—PIX



In front of Sullivan's Saddlery the night life of Old Town gets under way. Horse, of course, is a dummy, but the buckboard is authentic as are costumes and the high-wheeled bicycle in rear. The saddlery, from Fort Benton, was built before 1866; in it the Cullen Treaty with the Blackfeet Indians was signed that year



Gust Borgreen acts as old-time saddler in Sullivan's. Sullivan bought the place, then known as the Council House saloon, in Fort Benton in 1881; he once employed 10 saddlers who made, among others, 500 saddles for the Northwest Mounted Police. In rear is ad for "Studebaker Sensible Oscillating Bobsled"

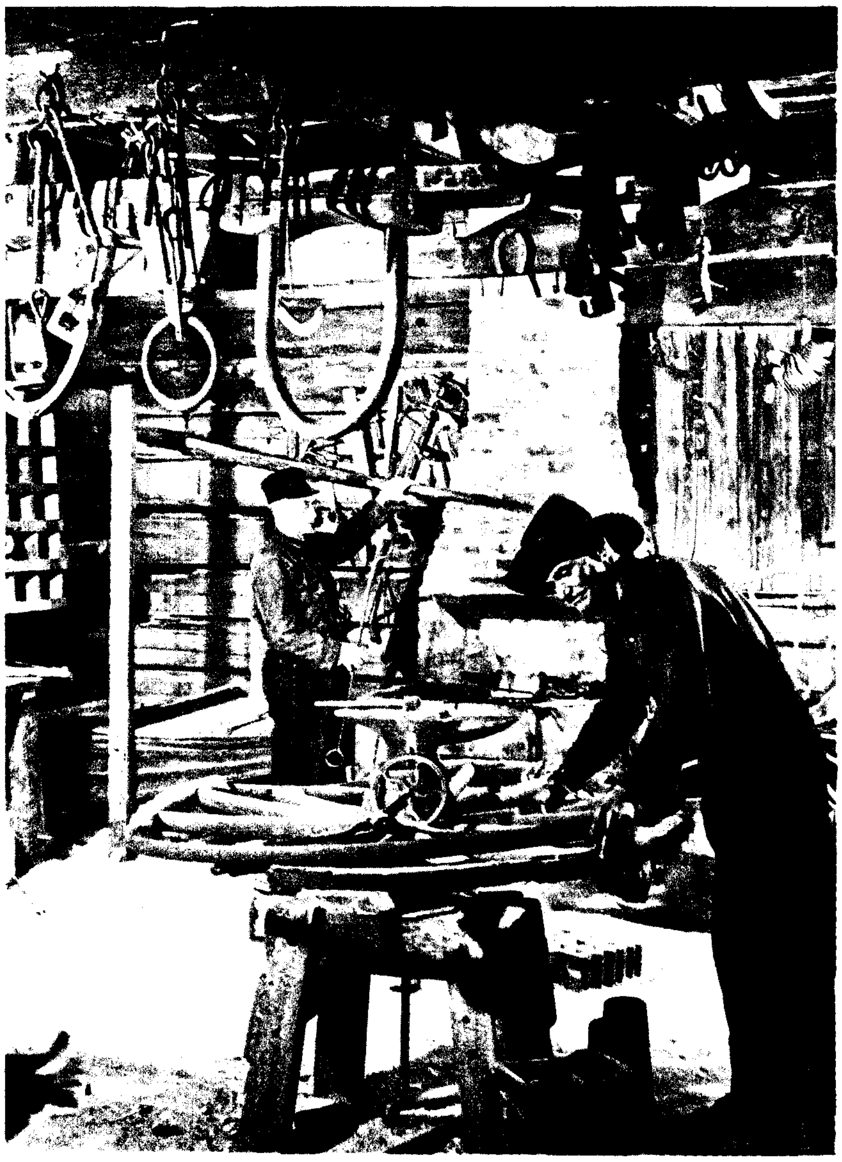


Old Town's hardware store features thunder mugs, mustache cups, square-cut nails, splashers. On top shelf are children's coffins made of pine. The three-foot ones cost $3.95; four-foot ones, $4.95. That gadget the "salesgirl" is demonstrating is a patent bosom stretcher—for boiled shirts

The "druggist," striped shirt and all, is trying to interest his client in a well-known brand of "Blood Medicine," or perhaps a nice bottle of "International Distemper Remedy—Use It At Our Risk." Other attractions are "Violet Water," and "Brown's Spafonacious Dentifrice for the Teeth." Drugs are all real antiques

The saloon came from Boulder, where it was built in 1884, when the town was quite a cattle center. Crack in mirror was really made by a bullet, the card table supporting the bald-headed "drunk" came from Belt, as did the bar. In rear is roulette type slot machine.. Bottle is "BOP Special"

This is the Ladies' & Men's Ready-to-Wear and Dry Goods Department of Old Town's drugstore. Building used to be the Elkhorn Trading Company, which housed general store and post office. Stock includes black wool underwear, high button shoes, men's rubber, celluloid and leather collars, wallpaper, scanties, hats



Bovey almost missed out on the blacksmith shop. It was built about 1882 in Augusta, had been torn down when he got it. Reclamation job was tough because more than 400 brands had been burned in walls and floor at the request of cattlemen who wanted to see what their designs looked like

Twelve-Hour Pass

BY STARR PARET

If you like to believe that all women are gentle and tender, then pass this story by. It tells of one woman whose deepest needs were dark and dangerous

MARTIN caught a ride from camp and as soon as they crossed the county line he began to feel wonderful. He could breathe better, he thought; the alkali was out of the air, and good green trees filtered the morning sun. In the distance the downtown Los Angeles buildings looked clean and tall and somehow exciting, and when they got into the city even the Saturday-morning crowds seemed festive to him. Maybe it would be a good pass this time. Maybe everything would be all right for once.

"You just say when, soldier," the driver told him. "I'm going as far as Beverly Hills."

Martin said: "There's a big market on Sunset near Fairfax; you'll see the sign: Hungle's. You can drop me there."

"All right." The man glanced at his passenger: a dark blade of a boy with a blade of a mouth in a narrow face not given to humor perhaps, but not tragic either. Just steady and quiet and grave. "Good to be home, I bet. What'll you do with your pass? I mean when you get the shopping done?"

Martin lighted his fifth cigarette in the past hour. "I got to pick up my wife at the market; she works there. Her family owns it, and I used to work there, too." He laughed. "Now I sell groceries in a PX. Maybe we'll go to the beach, maybe take a lunch to the park, I don't know. Whatever Cassie wants to do."

Cassie. He stopped feeling so good. The first pass in six weeks, and going home, and Cassie expecting him should make him feel wonderful, but it wasn't as simple as that. With Cassie it never was. Take it easy, he warned himself; but the back of his skull began to pound the way it always did when he was going to see Cassie again.

Hell, she's just a girl, he told himself irritably, just any little old girl you met in the store, only you happened to marry her. After her father kicked her around for sixteen years, and after that lout, Joe Reeves, married and damned near killed her.

Remember Joe Reeves. Remember yourself, never giving her a mean word, never laying a hand to her except in kindness in three years of being married to her. Give it time, he told himself. Give it time.

They passed La Brea, and a moment later there was the sign in dark blue neon against the sky—Hungle's—and the drumming threatened to split open his head until he reached down inside himself and brought up the thought: Well, suppose she does ruin it again—it's for Cassie, isn't it? She can ruin it if she wants.

After that he was nearly calm, and at the edge of the patio before the market he took a minute to thank the driver and agree with him that the place looked pretty slick.

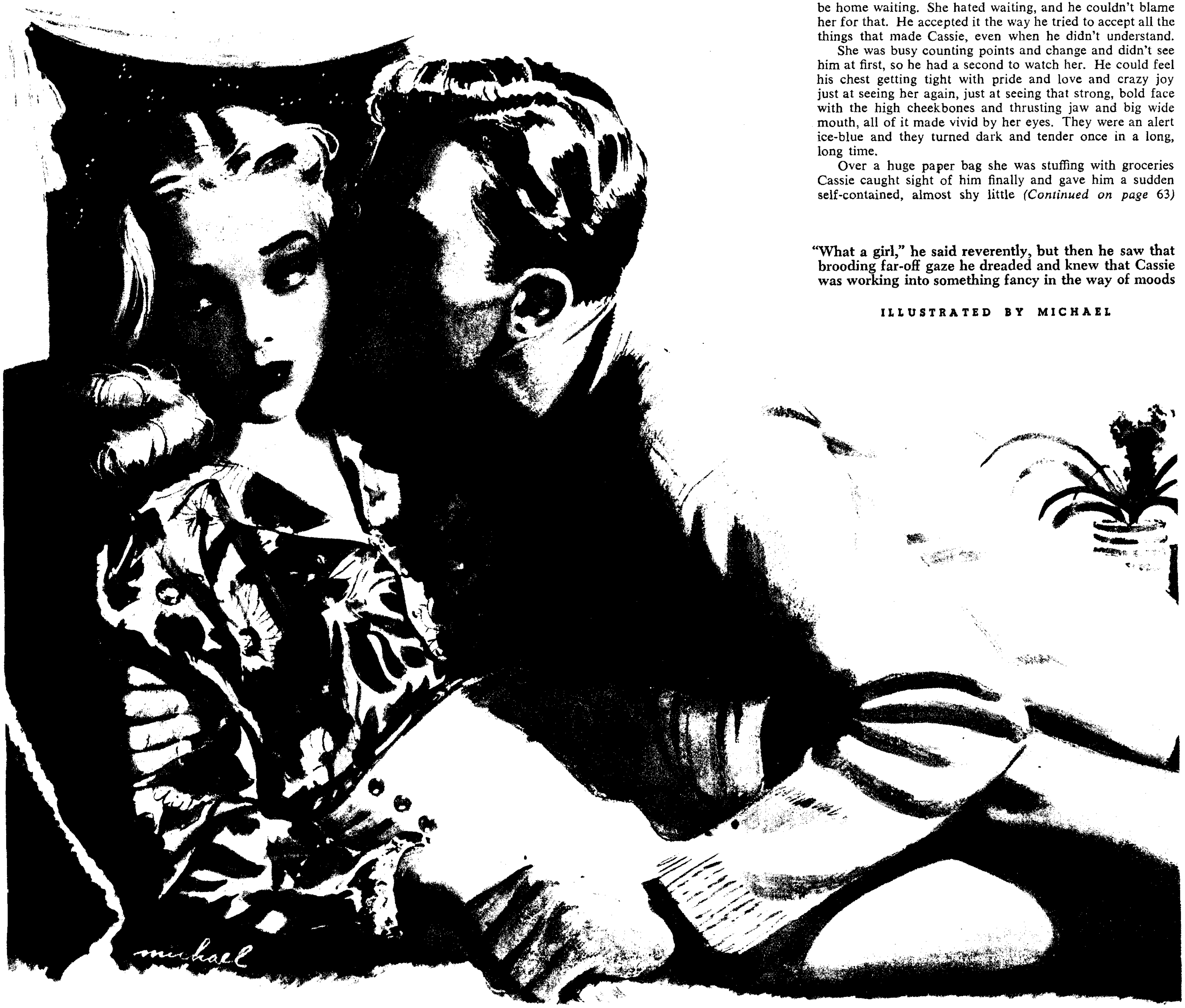
"Fancy groceries, fancy prices, huh?" the man asked; and Martin answered seriously: "That's right; it keeps the trade nice. They pay for not getting shoved around, like in the chain places. Maybe we don't get the turnover, but we get the class. So long, and thanks again."

His gaze shot over the market past Fruit and Vegetables, across Liquor, and Delicatessen, to the Wrapping box where Cassie was. She didn't have to be there, of course. She could be home asleep if she wanted, or home getting ready for him.

She was here, though. He always started a pass by picking her up here. She'd spend four evenings baking and cleaning and getting her hair done for him; but she wouldn't be home waiting. She hated waiting, and he couldn't blame her for that. He accepted it the way he tried to accept all the things that made Cassie, even when he didn't understand.

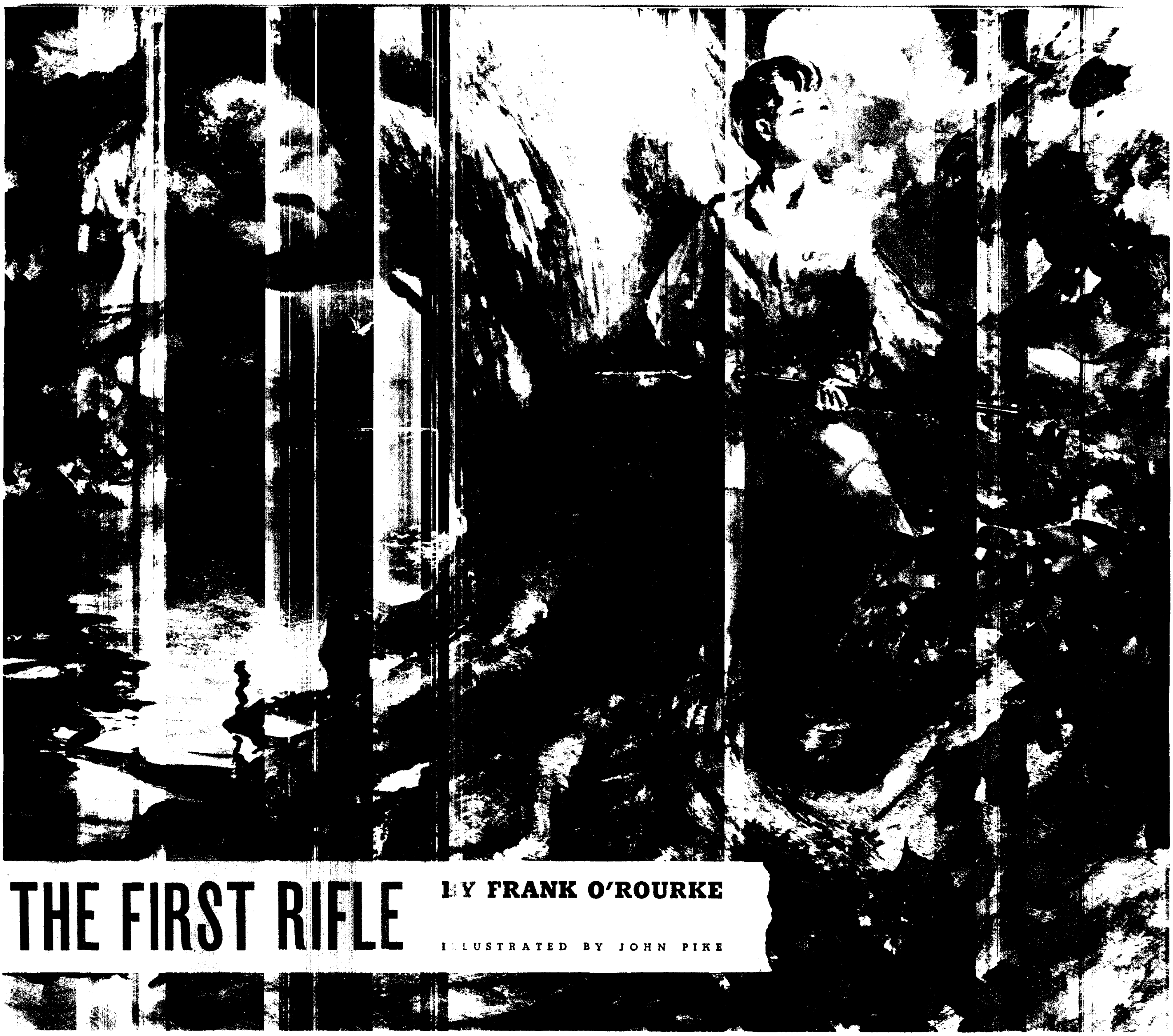
She was busy counting points and change and didn't see him at first, so he had a second to watch her. He could feel his chest getting tight with pride and love and crazy joy just at seeing her again, just at seeing that strong, bold face with the high cheekbones and thrusting jaw and big wide mouth, all of it made vivid by her eyes. They were an alert ice-blue and they turned dark and tender once in a long, long time.

Over a huge paper bag she was stuffing with groceries Cassie caught sight of him finally and gave him a sudden self-contained, almost shy little *(Continued on page 63)*



"What a girl," he said reverently, but then he saw that brooding far-off gaze he dreaded and knew that Cassie was working into something fancy in the way of moods

ILLUSTRATED BY MICHAEL



THE FIRST RIFLE

BY FRANK O'ROURKE

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN PIKE

Here is recaptured one of the first and greatest joys that growing up can bring to a boy

HE HURRIED down the long, cool alley of the lumbershed, peering squint-eyed at the square of yellow sunlight pouring in the west door. Then, leaving the lumbershed, he angled around the stockyards, across the switch track, and began to walk the railroad track to the bridge, balancing himself with his arms outstretched, the rifle in his right hand serving as a fulcrum on his balance. He fell off only twice from the stockyards to the bridge and he counted three hundred and thirty-three ties, so that was better than Jimmy Wax had done the week before; but he was alone and if he told about it, they would call him a bragger. And he thought how sad it was that all of his worth-while deeds were accomplished when he was alone, and nobody believed him later.

It was late May, one week after the closing of school. The land was green and fresh from the spring rains, and the creek under the bridge ran three feet deep, bell-clear to the bottom. He climbed up on the second crosspiece of the bridge railing and leaned far over, his thighs pressing against the top rail, his toes hooked securely under the second, and watched the minnows swim upstream in little schools and the small green frogs hop lazily on the creek bank, leaving infinitesimal tracks in the soft black mud.

Up the creek, across the right-of-way fence, the cattails were growing light green in thick wedge-shaped clumps, and in the meadow he could see the brown-yellow backs of Mrs. Bruggeman's Jersey cows as they grazed, noses down, in the deep swamp hay grass. It was cool and the sun was low now, and heating the wind to a gentle warmth, so that he stood on the bridge rail and held his mouth open and let the wind wash against his teeth and tickle his tongue.

He breached the small rifle, a .22, and shoved a "short" home in the chamber. He looked up the creek, seeing the frogs and minnows, and then two robins talking in the willow tree on the west bank, where the swimming hole had been the year before. He picked out a tin can lying in the mud at the foot of the willow tree and squinted carefully along the open back sight of the rifle, centering the front blade sight in the V notch, just as his older brother had shown him when he was home on furlough at Christmas. He had memorized the shooting rules and practiced them with his BB gun during the spring, waiting until his father gave him this wonderful .22 for his tenth birthday.

He aimed now and fired as his brother had taught him, and did not flinch when the .22 popped sharply. He lowered the rifle and looked at the tin can, which lay about twenty-five yards up the creek, seeing the funnel-shaped hole in the mud about two inches right of the can. He frowned and then remembered that his brother had said, "Now don't get all riled up if you miss at first, Joe. You just keep shooting and practicing the way I showed you, and pretty soon you'll be hitting 'em dead center. And remember, don't aim at anything too far off to start with, and don't shoot any good birds or anything that has a use in this world."

He had asked his brother what he meant by "anything that has a use in this world," and his brother had hesitated a moment and then said, "Well, put it this way, Joe. You play like you are the thing you want to shoot, and say to yourself, 'Am I causing any harm that he ought to shoot me with that .22?' And then if you can say yes, honestly, you go ahead and shoot."

He looked at the tin can and remembered what Bill had said. "Don't get riled up if you miss at first, Joe"

Before he got the .22 he had tried that several times when he was out with the BB gun. He played that he was a frog and he couldn't see where frogs hurt anybody, and then he played like a minnow and a robin and a meadow lark, and he couldn't see where any of them did a bit of harm in the world. That

(Continued on page 79)

FASCIST FINALE

BY JAMES E. ROPER and JOHN CHABOT SMITH

The Partisans of northern Italy didn't wait for Allied liberation; they ran their own revolution. In the process, they made a good beginning for Italy of the future

ACME

The snow-clad peaks of northern Italy, along the French border, have been a battleground for patriots warring against Fascism from as far back as 1927. More recently their targets have also included the German troops occupying Italy

These Italian Partisans were among those who liberated their own city of Milan in April—a feat celebrated by the capture and execution of Mussolini and numerous other Fascists. German troops, in their barracks, were ignored

ACME

RADIOED FROM MILAN

A LONG burst of bullets from a tommy gun slashed across the cathedral square in downtown Milan. Slugs splattered along the curbs or bored through shop windows. Several scores of persons, with a hop, skip and jump, ducked into side streets and then almost good-naturedly popped their heads out from around corners. A jeep carrying American correspondents pulled up to the curb on Rastrelli Street, and its occupants scrambled into a doorway out of the line of fire. A Partisan with a red bandanna around his neck stepped up. "Aren't you going to the hanging?" he asked, smiling.

"Who's shooting?" he was asked.

"We're just shooting at some Fascists down here, but the hangings are over that way. Let me take you to a hanging."

The correspondents climbed into the jeep and went zigzagging off to a far corner of Milan. The day was Saturday, and Milan was having a revolution by permission—Allied permission. It was a revolution in the purest sense of the word; people who had been oppressed by Fascists for so many years had risen up and now were taking vengeance. The revolutionists were in complete power in Milan and had been for several days. American troops were all around Milan but were not to enter the city for two more days. Meanwhile the Partisans were eliminating in their own fashion a lot of folks that responsible Allied authorities would have found troublesome to deal with.

A few correspondents were the only Americans in the city for several days and they were cheered everywhere. As their jeep rolled up to the hanging place they saw several hundred persons standing around, but no gallows.

"Viva gli Americani," someone yelled, and the crowd swarmed around us. They had been peering at the bloody body of a man sprawled on the sidewalk.

"Oh, it's all over. They shot him instead of hanging him," complained the red-bandannaed Partisan, with some disappointment.

"Who was he?"

"Just a Fascist. Let's go someplace else," the Partisan replied.

As they drove away, the dead Fascist's blood flowed off the sidewalk and dripped into the gutter.

A few blocks away, 300 Germans at the Regina Hotel and another 250—mostly officers—at the Gallia Hotel (Nazi headquarters for Lombardy) comfortably awaited the American Army's entry into Milan so they could surrender to them instead of to the Partisans. The Partisans, in turn, intent on hunting down Fascists whom they hated more, were content to let the Germans remain undisturbed.

Nazis in Role of Spectators

Like an audience at a play, the Nazis sat on the hotel balconies and watched the activity below. Partisans waving huge Communist banners or their own battle streamers raced through the streets in captured German vehicles. At least 60 per cent of these Partisans professed to be Communists and another 10 per cent Socialists. While the so-called Communists often failed to believe in collective ownership of farms and factories, they looked to Moscow for spiritual guidance and plastered Milan with posters saying "Down with the monarchy!"

There was nobody to challenge them. Fascism, like a rotten tooth in northwestern Italy, had been extracted by Partisans, and now Italy was bleeding. The American attitude seemed to be that it was a wholesome bloodletting. The tooth which was yanked had been prodded and loosened during the past fall and winter by Partisans living in the mountains around Milan as well as in the city where Fascism was born.

EUROPEAN

At Domodossola, near the Swiss border, Partisans captured the railroad station from the Germans and held it for 35 days. From the Swiss Red Cross they got sacks of food. Wary of strangers, one Partisan challenged photographer taking picture

Perhaps the first major incident came early last November in the foothill village of Voghera, thirty miles south of Milan. A German officer was challenged by an Italian sentry just as he was entering his own barracks. "Surely you recognize me. I'm a German," the officer complained.

"Certainly you recognize me—I'm a Partisan," came the reply.

As the German slowly raised his hands, a group of Partisans tiptoed into the barracks, where they awoke, one by one, sixty Italian Fascist and German soldiers. Every man in the barracks gave up without a shot. Back in the hills the Partisans laughed and joked about how their new leader "Eduardo" planned the successful Voghera operation; how Eduardo's men pedaled up and down the road on bicycles pretending to be innocent villagers but actually scouting and protecting the truckloads of Partisans who removed the Fascists and Germans to the hills.

The smooth operation convinced these Partisans that Eduardo was their man, although they knew almost nothing about him except his battle name of Eduardo. His real name was Pietro Italo and he was typical of any number of mountain Partisan leaders who began leading forays against the Germans about this time.

Eduardo's cheeks were hollow but his head wasn't. The son of a country doctor, lithe, black-haired Eduardo had studied law before being drafted into the Italian army, where he became a captain in the crack Alpine troops. After Italy's surrender to the Allies his hatred for Fascism grew steadily, until finally, a year ago this spring, he took to the Apennine hills to aid the Partisans.

At that time, they were split into tiny, quarrelsome factions, with the commander for the day being determined by who got up first in the morning. Eduardo gave up in disgust and joined a Communist Garibaldi "brigade." From only a hundred men, by November it had grown to 1,000 and Eduardo was chief. That was when they captured the garrison at Voghera.

A Rebuff to the Colonel

Before long the Partisans had complete control of seventy-two square miles of mountains south of Milan. They began to call this "my country," with the rest of the German-Fascist-occupied northern Italy called "enemy country." One day a German colonel drove into the Partisans' area prepared to give Eduardo a free zone, which the Nazis would not enter. Eduardo smilingly agreed. The boundaries of the proposed free territory, he said, would stretch from the American lines in the south to the Brenner Pass in the north.

The German colonel fumed at this suggestion to deliver all northern Italy over to the Partisans. He threatened to attack. On November 15th he did, with 8,000 soldiers.

The German troops had mules and artillery, and they forced Italian villagers to carry supplies. There was little the Partisans could do against such opposition; they fell back into the snow-covered mountains. There the Germans tried to hunt down individual Partisans, tracing them by footprints in the snow.

That winter, fourteen of Eduardo's men froze to death while others were captured and executed when they went into the villages for food. An American captain who passed through German lines twice arranged with Eduardo to have American aircraft parachute arms and ammunition, but each drop was followed by Fascist-Nazi attacks on the area where the supplies fell. Eduardo's men were scattered and beaten like the other mountain bands.

As for the city Partisans, it was a case of plot and counterplot—probably the most concentrated intrigue throughout the long history of northwestern Italy. Each Milan bank, shop and factory had its own Committee of National Liberation. Generally they included representatives of five or six political parties but always there would be Communists and Socialists. Scores of Fascist agents tried to join these Partisan groups, and if they were successful, the Gestapo and OVRA soon would begin arresting.

When Partisans discovered a Fascist in their midst, they would hand over his name their special *Squadre Azione Patriottica;* before long the Fascist would meet a violent end. Four or five Fascist spies died weekly in Milan throughout the winter. Probably the most frequent means of execution was for a *Squadre Azione Patriottica* member to ride a bicycle up alongside the victim, fire several shots into his head, then speed off.

A Partisan identification card did not bear the name of its holder, but included a picture of Matteotti the Socialist whom Mussolini had murdered, and his words: "You can kill me, but the ideal in me you can never kill." These words were like a burning light to Partisans who were arrested and tortured by Fascists, including the notorious band of Doctor Piero Koch, an Italian police commander.

Koch operated in Rome until that city was about to fall to the Allies, then moved to a big fifteenth-century mansion at 17 Via Paolo Uccello, Milan. It was inside this flower-surrounded villa that members of the band took morphine and cocaine before burning their victims' breasts with lighted cigarettes or branding them with red-hot needles. Among Koch's elegant associates was the beautiful Luisa Ferida, one of the two most prominent actresses in Italy. Her madly vain actor-husband, Osvaldo Valenti, also could be seen striding into the mansion wearing his favorite yellow-striped sweater with a bandoleer of cartridges over his shoulder and a huge pistol strapped to his waist.

The Milanese began to refer to No. 17 as *Villa Triste*, the Villa of Sorrows. Word of the tortures spread until even the Fascists disclaimed any responsibility for deeds carried out there. Eventually the Partisans caught the fleeing Luisa and Valenti, and late one night tommy-gunned them in the garden.

One rallying point for Partisans was the home of Count and Countess Joseph dal Verma. They used to entertain Fascists while maintaining undercover contacts with Partisans. After the Fascists fled, the couple honored fifty tough bewhiskered Partisans at

(Continued on page 56)

Women as well as men were warriors in Partisan groups; this schoolteacher fought side by side with her husband

EUROPEAN

Below is a typical Italian Partisan soldier. Note that the clothing he is wearing has been captured from Germans

EUROPEAN

Dr. Wehr prepares to plug something with a rifle. He's an expert with both rifle and revolver, and the mountaineers like him—they like folks who can "shoot good"

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM INTERNATIONAL

Kentucky Doctor

BY TIMOTHY J. SULLIVAN

If you're going to be a county health officer in the mountains, it's a good idea to know a few things besides medicine. For instance, marksmanship helps

The doctor in his laboratory. Vaccination and similar things scared many in the mountains. Wehr unscared them

RAYMOND EUGENE WEHR can sign himself B.S., B.M., M.D. and M.P.H., the last of which means Master of Public Health and not miles per hour. All these degrees, plus more than ten years' experience, make him a man of science, but he doesn't look it. With his thirty-six years, 235 pounds, and five feet ten inches of height, he looks more like a professional wrestler who has passed his prime. Catch him out walking with his wife and their husky eight-year-old son, glance at his thinning hair and mild blue eyes peering through thick spectacles, and listen to his high-pitched voice, and you'd put him down as a meek man well broken to domestic harness.

Well, he's a devoted family man, all right, but there's nothing meek about him. On the contrary, he's tough. Down in eastern Kentucky, where everyone calls him Doc, the mountain folk know him as the toughest county health officer who ever rode a horse through their hollows and hills.

"You'll never see Doc Wehr turn the other cheek," said one of his mountain friends, "except maybe to duck."

Doc Wehr was sent into the Kentucky mountain country by the state health authorities to "reduce the incidence and prevent the spread of communicable diseases, by education, sanitation and immunization." That would be a sizable job anywhere. In the Kentucky mountains, where the people are rugged individualists and actively resent any prying into their affairs, it required almost superhuman patience, tact and fortitude.

But Doc Wehr has had remarkable success, and he insists that it hasn't been particularly difficult.

"Mountaineers are fine people," he said. "Leave their whisky and women alone, and you'll be all right. Of course," he added thoughtfully, "if they know you can shoot good, it helps."

And Doc Wehr can shoot good. He has been a crack shot with a rifle and a pistol almost since he was fifteen years old, when his father gave him a .22-caliber rifle as his first "big" present. Besides that, he can throw a hunting knife through a paper plate at twenty feet, and can send a belt ax thudding into a tree at twice that distance. All of these accomplishments helped when he went into Elliott County in eastern Kentucky, on his first assignment. He went as a county health officer, arriving in Sandy Hook, the county seat and only town, with ten dollars and a map of the district.

Most of the mountain people greeted him with open hostility, but for some reason, Uncle Emmie, a leader of local opinion, took a liking to him and gave him some sage advice which the doctor has never forgotten.

"Remember now, young feller," said Uncle Emmie, "you're a doctor and not a revenooer. Don't pay no attention to nobody's stills."

A few weeks after his arrival Doctor Wehr and Uncle Emmie went fishing and joined some other anglers. One of them was a certain Shadwell, a famous local pistol shot. During the afternoon Uncle Emmie suggested that Shadwell give an exhibition of his skill. Without comment Shadwell produced a handful of bottle tops and placed them in a row on the top rail of a fence some thirty feet away. Then he grinned at Doctor Wehr.

"Say, Doc," he drawled, "why don't you show us how to do it?"

And to Shadwell's surprise, that's exactly what the health officer did. He stepped forward, drew his revolver from a shoulder holster, and clipped four bottle tops with four shots.

Shadwell refused to shoot.

"Can't nobody do better'n that," he said. "Doc, you're all right."

Education the Hard Way

Doctor Wehr obtained his medical education at the University of Cincinnati, across the river from his home town of Covington, Kentucky. Because of his bulk, and his prowess as a member of his high-school football team, he was a natural for an athletic scholarship. He was offered five, but turned them all down and worked his way through school.

"Dad pointed out," he said, "that legs and arms get broken, and shoulders pop out of joint, and then bang goes your scholarship."

He worked at a dozen different jobs during his four years in medical school, but finances were always a problem until he obtained an appointment as professor of science at the Cincinnati College of Embalming. There, in collaboration with another professor, he developed a new, neutral embalming fluid which is still in use.

"It was a wonderful concoction," he told me. "We held one corpse six months, and it looked as fresh as the day it was embalmed. It was a real beauty."

In 1932, after he had completed his internship at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Covington, Doctor Wehr tried to join the Army, but was turned down because of bad feet. This is still a source of amusement to his father, a postman who has been tramping the hot pavements of Covington for twenty-six years and has never even had a blister.

So Doctor Wehr tried private practice for two years, then became interested in public health problems and accepted the Elliott County appointment.

The atmosphere in Elliott County was decidedly more friendly after the episode of the bottle tops, and after the doctor had shown what he could do with knife and ax, but it was still a long time before the mountain people looked with favor upon a health program; and probably nowhere in the country was one more needed.

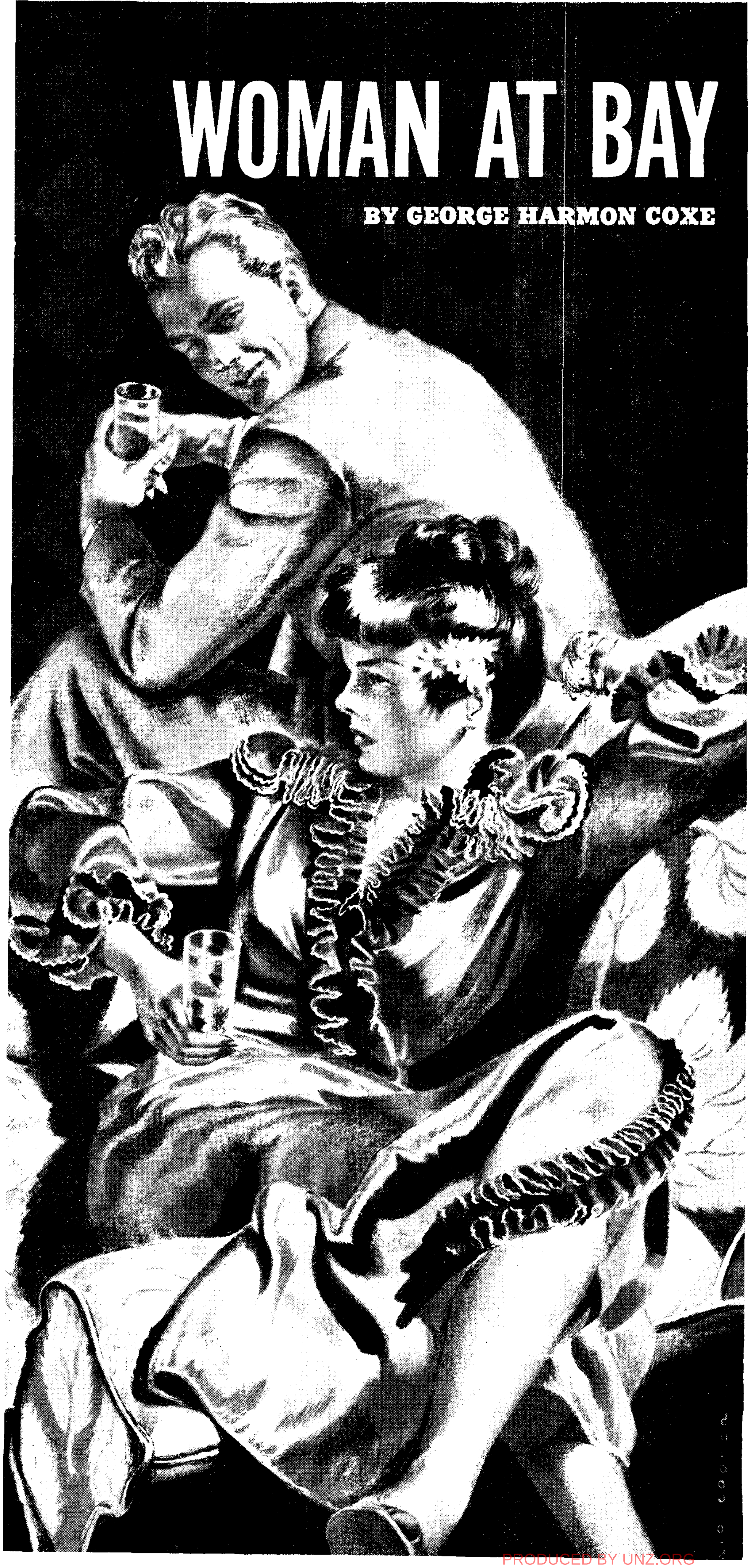
At that time Elliott was one of the poorest counties in Kentucky, with 6,000 inhabitants scattered over 225 square miles of mountains. There were no electric lights, running water or paved roads anywhere in the county; only two or three daring travelers who had been to Lexington had even seen a bathtub. One telephone line with two short extensions served the entire population. This line was strung along the Little Sandy River, and when floods didn't put it out of business, practice shots at insulators did. Fourteen health officers had preceded Doctor Wehr in Elliott County, and none had stayed more than three months.

Doctor Wehr started his program by making three visits to each of fifty-two widely scattered schools and giving the pupils and teachers, and as many parents as would show up, typhoid, diphtheria and smallpox vaccinations. He traveled by horseback and he

(Continued on page 62)

WOMAN AT BAY

BY GEORGE HARMON COXE



The Story:

In Havana to wangle a manuscript containing sure-fire evidence of pro-Nazism from Vichyite Armand Sevigny's widow, Paul MacKinnon landed in a tricky situation: Sevigny's widow was none other than Paul's beautiful ex-wife, Norma Travers, and Norma did not yet have the manuscript; Victor Molina—the man who was to deliver it to her—had been murdered in the hotel room reserved for their meeting. Paul, anxious to believe her when she begged his help in finding the manuscript and told him she was being trailed by a ship's steward, Manuel Zayas, decided to play along. Allied with Leon Vidal, a reporter, Paul went to work, found himself matching wits with a shrewd member of the Havana police, Rodriguez; romantically pursued by Adrienne Brissard, a friend of Norma's; at sword's edge with hard-boiled Bruce Aitchison and his friend, Marie Gerand, both bent on keeping the manuscript from government hands. The pressure tightened even more when, held up by two of Aitchison's henchmen, Paul escaped, then found Norma had some information for him about Dennis Clarke, whom Paul had known in Spain, and, more surprising, discovered Aitchison wished to confer with him the following day.

III

MacKINNON and Norma had made their breakfast date for nine, but Norma told him he had better wait until she phoned so that she could be sure everything was ready and hot. At three minutes after nine, he got the call and when he stepped into the corridor, he saw the waiter come out of her room and hurry toward the service elevator.

She had ordered the table wheeled before the window, and the two chairs were in place when MacKinnon went in. She was wearing gray slacks and a checked blouse, soft-looking and open at the throat, and there was a ribbon around her blond hair. He was so taken up with looking at her that she had to speak to him twice before he heard.

"You sit there," she said, and pointed. "I didn't order you a boiled egg," she added, when they were seated, "because you always liked them just so—do you still take just one?—and you couldn't say three and a half minutes because if the egg wasn't pretty averaged-sized, it didn't come out right. So I had them scrambled."

MacKinnon said these were fine and the thin toast was just right and the sliced fresh pineapple an inspiration. But as he talked he was suspicious of her unaffected pleasantness. Something had happened to her since yesterday, she showed no hostility now.

He kept glancing at her when he could without appearing to, and still wondering. He had come with what he hoped was an open mind, to find out what had happened with Denny Clarke and to see if she had learned anything that would help. Now he asked about last night.

She began by telling where they had gone and how she had managed to stay sober while Clarke was getting drunk, but after that, MacKinnon no longer listened with his mind, because the things she had managed to learn from Denny Clarke approximated what Adrienne Brissard had already told him.

He watched her and was outwardly attentive, but presently most of his original doubts and fears came back and he began to review the story Norma had told him yesterday afternoon after they had run away from the murder room.

He remembered the weakness in that story and his own unasked questions. Much of that story could, he saw, be true. The part about Sevigny and how she felt about him, you could believe or not, depending on what you wanted to believe. But the other part, about bringing the manuscript to Cuba, was something else. . . .

HE REALIZED she had changed the subject. She wasn't talking about Denny Clarke any more. As though she had read his mind and found a common meeting ground, she said, "You didn't believe me yesterday, did you?"

"What? Yesterday?" he said fatuously.

"Yes." Her voice was quiet now and she was making formless designs on the tablecloth with the handle of a spoon. "I had a feeling that you wanted to believe me but you didn't—quite. I've been thinking of what I said and I can see why. I guess I didn't tell you all of it."

He waited. He thrust his hands in his pockets and looked out the window.

"It's about the manuscript," she said. "I told you why I couldn't turn it over to anyone in France and how afraid I was of the underground. I suppose I should tell you about Victor, too, because he is important."

She paused, still working on the tablecloth. "You don't have to know what country he represented because that doesn't matter. I told you he was a friend of Dad's, but there was another reason why he wanted to help. You see, his sister married a Frenchman. There were two sons and both were sent to Germany by the *(Continued on page 33)*

Paul wasn't paying too much attention to what he was saying. Yet he had an uneasy feeling that Adrienne was studying him, waiting for him to make the next move

ILLUSTRATED BY MARIO COOPER

Will Marshall get aboard horse? Miss Mayo fears not

Mr. Marshall reaches for ripcord that isn't there

Miss Mayo distraught at lack of co-operation between Marshall and Buster

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR COLLIER'S BY GEORGE STROCK

I Soloed in 76 Minutes

BY JIM MARSHALL

EXCITING stories have been appearing all over lately by people, some of them writers and all of them drunk with power, about how they learned to solo an airplane in five hours. In the digest magazines this was reduced to two hours, owing to space limitations.

Some of us old-timers have had just about enough. We have seen these new fads come and go. We can remember when the steam cars were going to replace the horse and when the automobile was going to replace the steam cars and when the airplane was going to replace everything except divots. Every new thing was going to replace the horse: That's the way they sold the first pogo sticks.

Well, take a look at it: According to the Department of Agriculture, there are now more horses than ever—and no cracks. We old-timers have come to the conclusion that the horse will soon replace the kiddie car, the automobile and the airplane, and you young power-mad people might as well get aboard and ride the trend.

Never mind this insane yearning to fiddle around with a two-hundred horsepower motor and a couple of wings. Learn to solo on a horse. Don't be a whitewing in the brave postwar world. Keep ahead of the procession!

When first I decided to learn to solo a horse, I was looking at a movie called Wonder Man, in which Mr. Samuel Goldwyn was trying to make a few honest dollars with the aid of a young woman named Miss Virginia Mayo and a young man named Danny Kaye. I suppose it was the title that got me to thinking about myself. And when I tried to think of someone to teach me to solo—well, there was Miss Mayo, right there.

I had viewed Miss Mayo before in The Princess and the Pirate, another of Mr. Goldwyn's works. In this she was a princess and then a pirate and then a princess, although menaced by a man named Robert Hope. At that time, however, I had no idea whatever that she might teach me horse-soloing. She didn't, either.

Reporter, forward-looking, gets ready for postwar transportation, in case there should be any

Well, anyway, I called up the Goldwyn Studios (GRanite 5111), where Miss Mayo is employed, and explained the matter.

"I think it is a splendid idea," said Miss Mayo. "I know all about horses."

This was a bit of a shock, but I controlled myself. "You *do!*"

"Sure! You remember the Andy Mayo act that played with Eddie Cantor in Banjo Eyes, and then went into Billy Rose's Diamond Horseshoe?"

"You mean the one with that animal called Pansy the Horse?" I said.

"That's it. I joined that act in St. Louis. Up to then I was just Virginia Jones. I was nuts about horses, so I changed my name to Mayo."

(You'd better not try to follow this chain of reasoning.)

I thought things over for a minute and then asked, "Where is Pansy now?"

"I don't know. But we wouldn't use him anyway. I know a good horse, named Buster. He's on a ranch in the San Fernando Valley. You can learn to solo on Buster."

"What model is Buster?"

"Late 1941. There haven't been any important changes since then. You say you never soloed before?"

I explained that the last time I had soloed was in the spring of 1865, when I galloped from Appomattox Court House (Va.) to New York (N.Y.) for Horace Greeley's Tribune with the news that Grant had surrendered to Lee, and the French and Indian War was over. I had beaten Walter Davenport of the Sun, by two hours. He had written a very sketchy piece saying that Lee had surrendered to Grant, about which he is still joshed. (Greeley fired me the next day, however. No explanation.)

A few mornings after my talk with Miss Mayo, I drove out into the valley, through the herds of whitefaces and the battalions of cowhands singing about home and sweetheart as they twanged their git-tars. I had a chuck wagon full of press agents, cameramen, two nurses and a chiropractor. Miss Mayo had on a riding outfit with new purple pants. We came to the stock ranch of Mr. Monti Montana and all of us got out. Mr. Montana showed the nurses and the chiropractor where to set up their first-aid tent and drove a truck up to the corral fence.

"The crash wagon," said Mr. Montana.

Then he gave me a wide-brimmed hat and a pair of chaps to which two large steers had contributed their entire hides. I estimated their wing span at 31 square feet. I put on the hat and chaps, and went into the corral. Buster was there, ready to go.

"This is Buster. He is ready to go," said Mr. Montana.

Buster sat down and stuck out a foreleg.

"He wants you to shake hands with him," said Miss Mayo.

"He wants you to crank him," said one of the press agents.

I cranked him and he got up. He was a pinto and he looked like a nice horse to me. Had to be careful, though.

"Not a talking horse, is he?" I asked Mr. Montana.

"He doesn't talk. He reads a lot, though."

"What sort of stuff?"

"Oh, everything. Western stories, Plato, Quentin Reynolds, movie magazines. He likes the cartoons in Collier's quite a lot—especially the ones where people are having trouble with airplanes and automobiles."

"Nice fuselage, too," I remarked. "What's his horsepower rating?"

"One."

(Continued on page 62)

SYMBOL OF SERVICE
TO INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE

INTERNATIONAL
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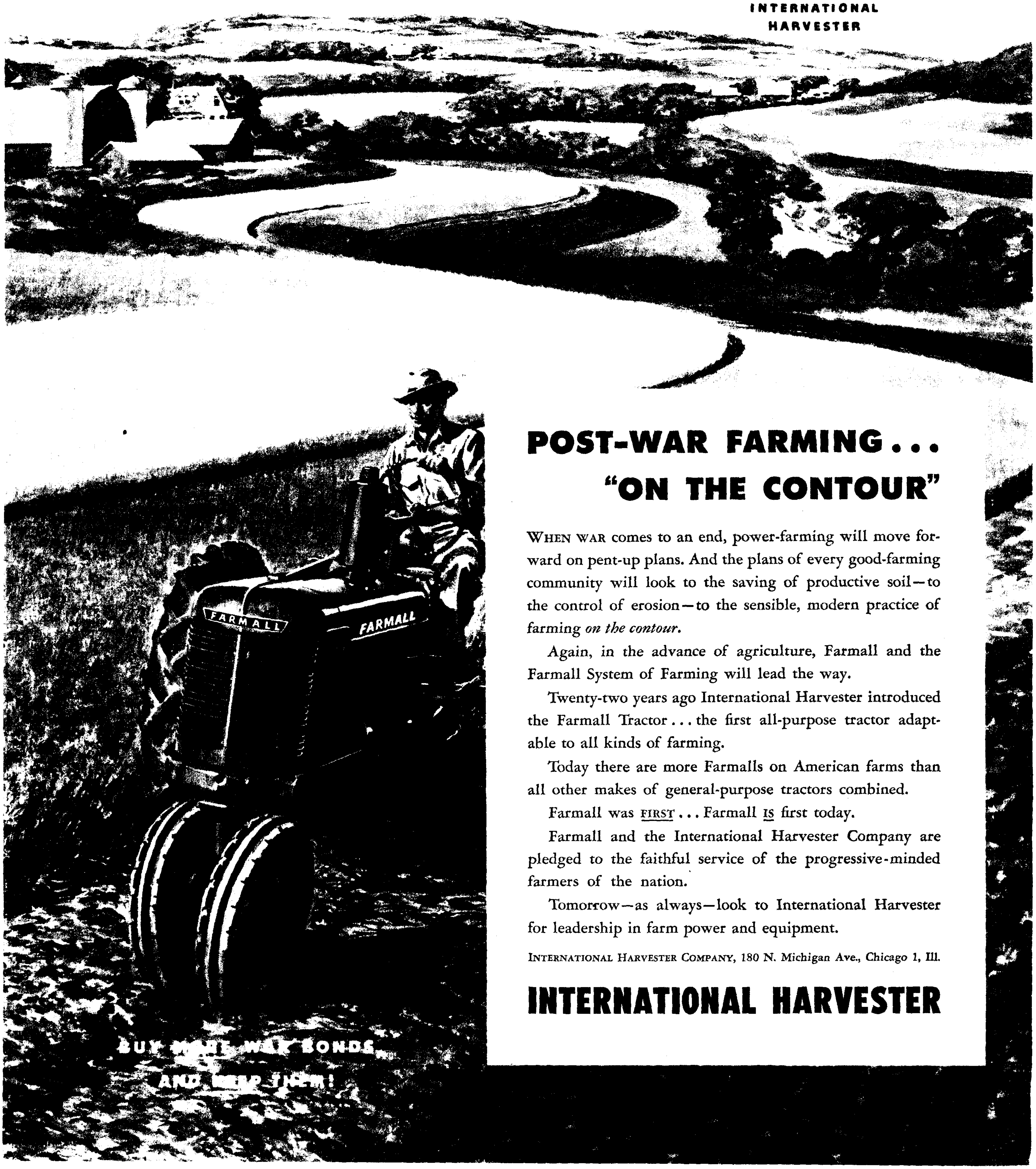
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INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER

Dr. Percy W. Zimmerman examines a seedless tomato formed by spraying flowers of the plant with a hormone preparation

BY BILL DAVIDSON

You're going to be surprised to learn what can be done to your flowers and vegetables with a few doses of the newly discovered plant hormones

HORMONES have been known to do wacky things to human beings, but no one had any idea of the lunatic chaos we were going to stumble into when the war accelerated *plant* hormone research.

Since 1939, a few drops of hormone spray have caused the following to happen: Rose bushes developed flowers that looked like daisies. Tomato plants overnight twisted themselves into living corkscrews and other Alice in Wonderland shapes. A passion flower in four hours turned into something that looked like a miniature cucumber. Bean plants grew grass instead of beans. An oak tree developed what seemed to be palm fronds. Tomato plants produced elongated tomatoes that looked like long, red bananas. Bushes suddenly blossomed flowers where there were supposed to be only leaves. Plants became oversexed and sprouted roots on leaves, fruit, bark, twigs—anywhere.

Then our scientists learned how to control these wild orgies, and today you actually can go to a seed store and buy bottles of colorless liquid that will perform miracles in the garden or farm.

One man in California invested every cent he had in raising a crop of holly for the last Christmas season. December came, and day after day went by, with no berries on the holly. Finally, in desperation, the man wrote to Doctor Percy W. Zimmerman, one of the country's leading plant hormone researchers.

Zimmerman recommended a commercial hormone product that had been developed at his laboratories. The man sprayed it on his holly. A week before Christmas, every plant blossomed forth with beautiful berries. The hormone preparation had saved the man's shirt.

Another time Doctor Zimmerman got an S O S call from a Puerto Rican coffee grower. The wartime labor shortage made it impossible for him to gather his coffee beans, which ripen a few at a time and have to be laboriously hand-picked from among the unripe ones. Doctor Zimmerman sent down a hormone spray. The skeptical coffee grower applied the spray. A short time later, all the ripe coffee beans fell off the plants. The unripe ones stayed on.

A hormone spray has been developed which allows tropical quinine plants to grow in this country (the Japs still hold most of the world's natural quinine-growing areas) and actually increases the amount of much-needed antimalaria drug in each plant. Another spray prevents the needles from dropping off Christmas trees. A third, when sprayed on potatoes, allows them to be stored almost indefinitely without shrinking or sprouting.

Still another, applied to a wheat field, will kill all of the mustard weed and leave the wheat unaffected. A hormone perfected at Cornell University can nearly double the rubber production of dandelion, with which the Russians are experimenting.

One new commercial product (a phenoxy compound dissolved in water) is something Jules Verne might have dreamed up. When it is sprayed on the blossoms of tomatoes, eggplant, cucumbers or squash, every single blossom will immediately start turning into a vegetable—large, sweet, firm and *without seeds.* The same compound, sprayed on lawns, will selectively kill nearly all the weeds, leaving the grass itself unharmed.

This hormone was developed in an unusual way. The scientists of the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research in Yonkers, N. Y., had been experimenting with the chemical for some time. One day, Robert Geary, a research man for one of the country's largest seed companies, dropped in. The conversation drifted to this new compound that produced seedless tomatoes.

"Who," yawned Geary, "wants to grow seedless tomatoes? I *like* the seeds."

"Yes," said young Doctor Albert Hitchcock, "but with this hormone, you get a tomato out of every single blossom, and they ripen four to five days faster, and the plant has time for a whole extra crop every year."

At that, Geary, who also makes a living out of a farm in Long Island, jumped out of his chair. "What's the name of this stuff?" he yelled. Within a month, his company had it on the market.

Saga of the Bees and the Flowers

As a producer of seedless fruits and vegetables, this hormone works very simply. Ordinarily, flowers become fruits when a female flower is pollenized by an insect which has lately been meandering about on a male flower. This process usually affects 82% of the flowers. The others die virginal spinsters. This hormone, coming in contact with all the flowers, pollenizes 100% of them artificially. The resultant fruits, however, are sexless, since there was no male involved in the operation. This accounts for their lack of seeds. In a vegetable like the squash or pepper, where more than half of the interior is taken up by the seeds, the additional pulp amounts to something.

"The watermelon," says Doctor Hitchcock regretfully, "is not affected by the hormone."

As a weed killer, the hormone works just as simply. The hormones of weeds like dandelion, pig grass, chick grass and cruciferae are all contained in the chemical. The hormones of grass are not. So when the stuff is sprayed on a lawn, the weeds get tremendously oversexed and begin producing roots all over themselves. Soon, worn out by this orgy, they die. The grass, in the meantime, continues to thrive.

Railroads will be using this hormone spray as an easy way of clearing up weeds between railroad tracks, and farmers can use it on a large scale for pastures, berry patches and nurseries. Home gardeners can use it on lawns and in gardens where there is no plant allergic to the hormone. A bean plant that gets a whiff goes through antics that will give you nightmares for the rest of your life. It will twist over horribly to one side, like the hunchback of Notre Dame. It will develop a leer, and lose all its flowers. Its leaves will become thin sweating tentacles. And dirty leprous growths will sprout out all over it.

The second of the fully developed hormone products (indole butyric acid) acts as a sort of shock treatment or blood transfusion for dying plants. By giving the plant a tremendous sex stimulation, it simply causes new roots and cells to grow. A twig or cut flower, dipped in the powder or solution of this hormone, will sprout roots in twenty-four hours.

In the early days of the war, this hormone saved a whole crop of vital, rubber-producing cryptostegia imported from Puerto Rico. The shrubs couldn't stand the ocean voyage and began to die soon after transplanting in this country. A truckload of the hormone preparation was rushed to Florida from New York. When it arrived, the cryptostegia looked like a field of punch-drunk weeds, and the local horticultural coroners had already pronounced them dead. The hormone was carefully applied to each plant. Within three days, nearly every shrub had revived.

The third of the commercial hormone products (alphanaphthylacetic acid) does strange things to fruit trees. When it is sprayed on apple trees before harvest time, the apples will not fall from the trees. This is done by sex-stimulating the growth of a layer of cells in the apple near the stem, thus making its hold on the tree very strong.

The same hormone, sprayed on apple trees in August, will prevent the trees from budding until very late the following spring or summer, thus definitely avoiding the danger of frost. In the same way, tropical fruits like avocados and mangoes can be grown fairly far north by delaying their budding until the warm days of summer arrive. The trees are made to hibernate until favorable weather comes around. Why this happens, nobody knows. Alphanaphthylacetic acid is the craziest and most unpredictable of the hormones.

Actually these are not real hormones at all, but chemical substitutes which have a similar structure and create the same effect.

The first work on these substances was begun by a Danish scientist named Boysen-Jensen in 1907. In the 1930s, two Americans, Doctor Charles L. Hamner and Doctor Paul C. Marth, developed the root-stimulating hormone. Others were brought on by the war and a series of fortuitous accidents.

A few years ago, a big New York florist made the same mistake that has plagued many a housewife. He carelessly put a bushel of apples into his refrigerator for safekeeping. In the refrigerator were thousands of dollars worth of flowers. That night, the florist opened the refrigerator door to carry the apples home. Every flower in the refrigerator had dropped off its stem.

Research later proved that the flowers had died as the result of ethylene gas given off by the apples. Ethylene is a plant hormone. That started a lot of scientists thinking.

Not long after that, Doctor Percy Zimmerman was sent out by his wife to mow the lawn of his Yonkers home. Doctor Zimmerman is the assistant director of the Boyce Thompson Institute and former dean of the University of Maryland College of Agriculture, but he cares for mowing lawns as little as anybody. He looked at the grass after he had mowed it. Then he thought of a hormone he had just isolated, naphthoxyacetic acid, which had stunted some plants.

"H'mm," he said to himself, and he sprayed the hormone on the lawn, in the hope that the grass would remain short and trim.

Recipe for Tomato Surprise

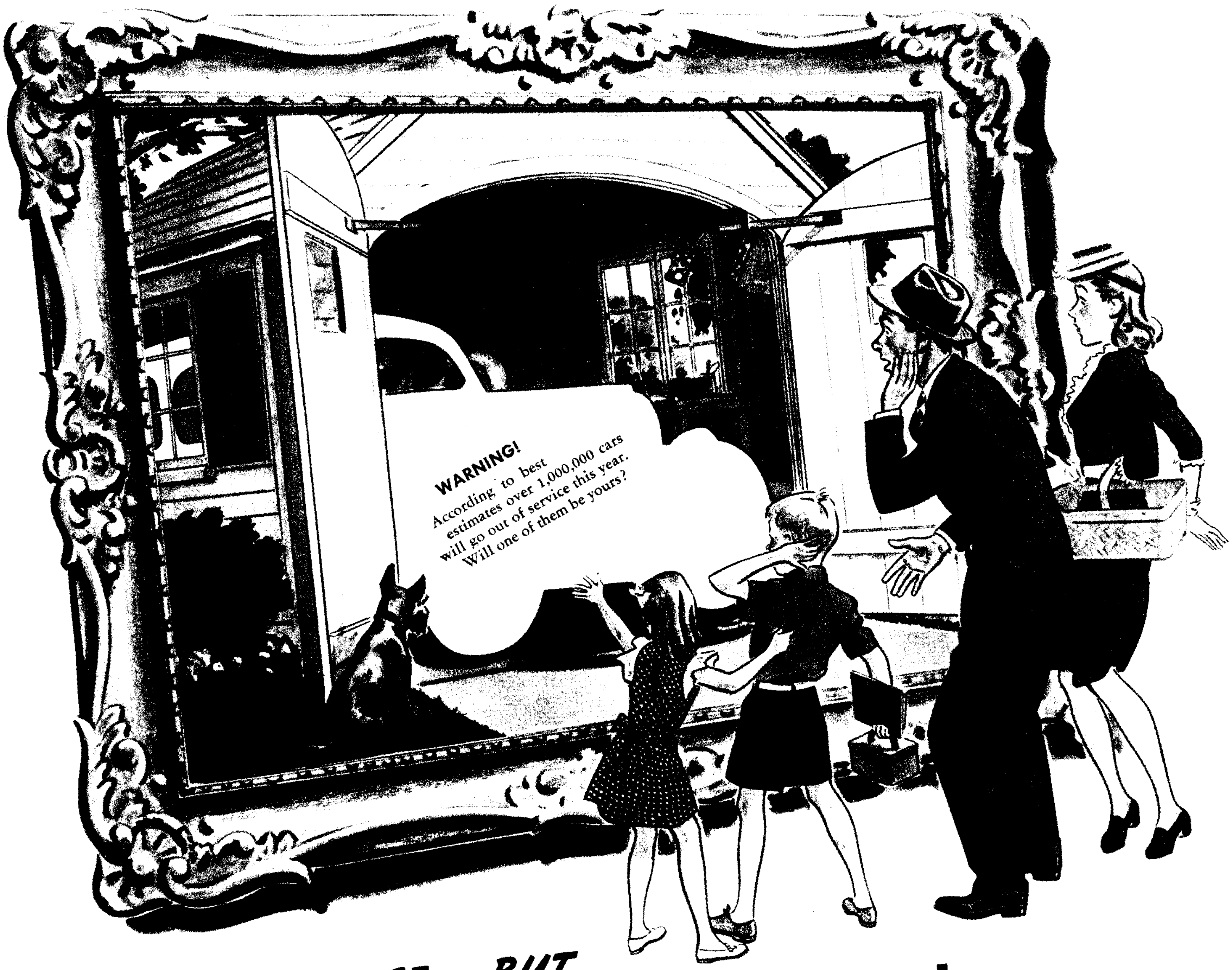
Some of the hormone got on a tomato plant growing in the yard. The grass on the lawn remained casually unaffected, but when Zimmerman happened to look at the tomato plant, his eyes almost popped out of his head. The plant was all twisted to one side, its leaves had become long thin curlicues, a bare six-inch stalk had shot up out of the plant, and on top of the stalk, like a flag on a flagpole, was a flower. That started Doctor Zimmerman on the research that produced the seedless fruit and weed-killer hormone.

Today, balding, brown-eyed Doctor Zimmerman sees a big-time future for the hormones when the end of the war releases the chemicals necessary for their mass production.

"Hormones," he said, "will aid in picking fruit by causing the fruit to fall off by itself. With hormones, we can strip all the leaves off a tree and allow the sun to get at the fruit, thus making the fruit bigger, juicier and more beautiful. When you have a tree, like a mango, which produces fruit twice a year, you can stagger flowering on portions of the tree with a hormone spray and have mangoes every month.

"In fact," he added, looking fearfully out of the window at a tobacco plant that had taken on the appearance of a cactus, "who knows what to expect? Personally, the things scare the devil out of me." ★★★

PHOTOGRAPH FOR COLLIER'S BY BEN SCHNALL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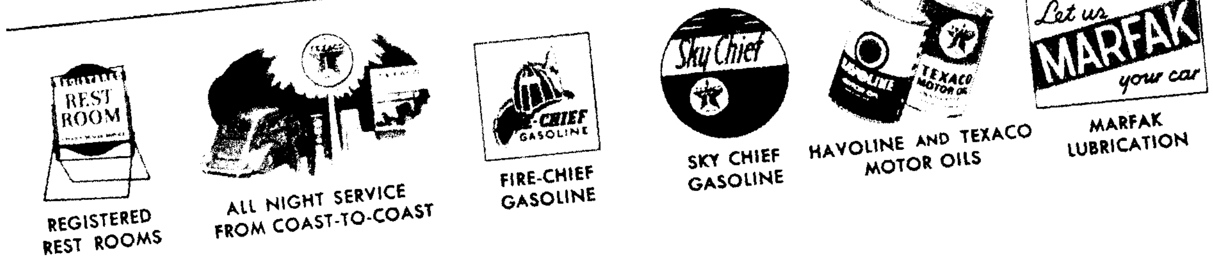
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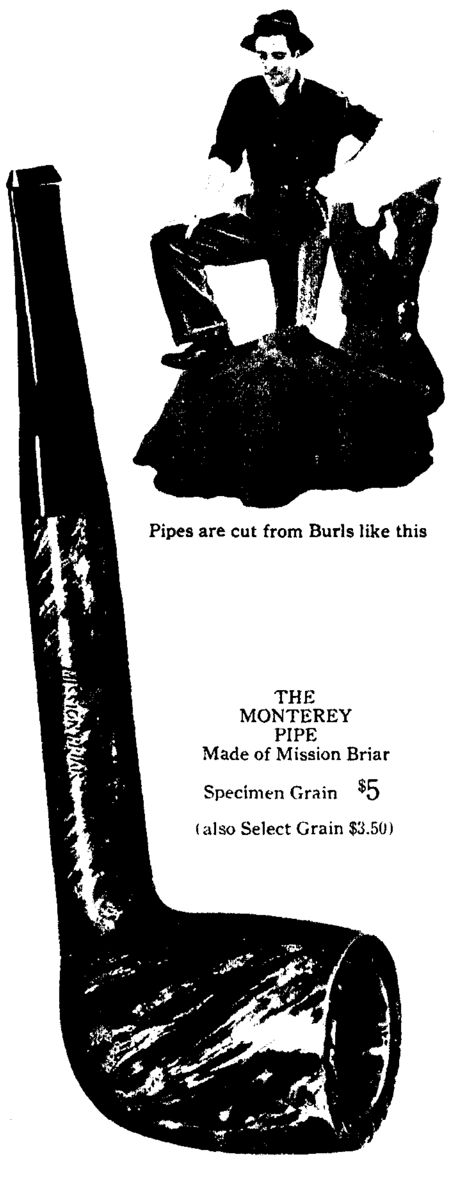

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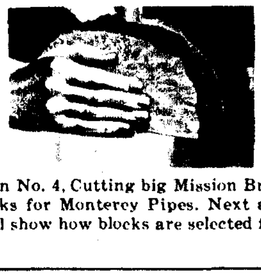

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I Testify:

Continued from page 14

of survivors, seems to have been designed to hurt, to humiliate and to destroy. Men able and willing to work in munitions factories or in the fields were fed enough to keep them alive but no more. All lost weight. Bread, potatoes, a watery vegetable soup and once a week a dab of margarine or a thin slice of sausage were the chief items of diet. For the nonworkers at Dachau, Colonel Hathaway calculated that only about 500 calories a day were provided. I saw thousands of men who seemed literally to consist of only skin and skeleton. They had the look of beaten and starved animals. Routine deprivation bowed their spirits and drained their minds.

Apparently the program was designed to kill Jews, Poles and Russians. Polish Jews seemed to have been worst treated. In fact, according to testimony both at Buchenwald and at Dachau, Polish Jews especially were forced to sleep in three-tiered bunks five men to each bed no more than five feet wide. I saw these bunks while men awaiting removal from the camp still occupied them. It was intended by the Nazis that these men should sicken and die. Many did. Few Polish Jews survived the dreadful ordeal.

Other Poles who would or could work were employed. The roll was called in the yard at 4 A.M. If any failed to respond, the whole group was held until the missing man was located. Sometimes the answer would be "Present but dead." The prisoner uniform was a thin suit of awninglike material with broad vertical stripes of blue and a dirty white. Conversation was not permitted in the barracks. There was no reading, no music, no radio, no stimulation of any kind for the mind. Many became insane. Few seemed wholly normal even after the Germans were driven out of the camps. We were followed by great crowds of broken men. When a half-smoked cigarette was dropped to the ground, one or more prisoners instantly jumped for it.

The tortures, the mass murders in the gas chambers, the hangings, the shooting of the more important prisoners whom it had been decided to kill, naturally followed. No inspection was ever allowed. The International Red Cross could not enter. Even when Heinrich Himmler, the killer, visited Dachau, he was said to have entered only the cleaner and better barracks. Such was the treatment given political prisoners in the concentration camps.

A Whole Nation Brought to Ruin

But the disintegration of Germany is not limited by prison walls. War has also destroyed the proud industrial cities of Germany—something that was not to be avoided unless free men were to surrender to the Nazis and admit the German claim to rule the world.

Munich, hard by Dachau, now is a stricken city, and this is another kind of fact to remember and to consider: Once the home of 800,000 people, only about 475,000 remained when the Americans arrived. The heart of the city was blasted to sterility. Within a circle a mile and more in radius, almost everything was hit or destroyed. The Rathaus, the city hall first built seven hundred years ago, was a wreck. The destruction of the industrial cities outstrips imagination. In Cologne, in the Ruhr, in most of the manufacturing cities east and west, bombs have blasted the factories, plants and warehouses into nothingness. We and our allies destroyed the railroad shops and many of the locomotives and cars. The retreating Germans blew up most of the bridges.

The destruction has to be seen to be realized. Few factories remain undamaged. Most are utterly demolished. The vast Krupp plants at Essen look like something that might remain after Judgment Day or after a fiery comet had collided with the earth.

In a word, Germany has already lost its industry and the essentials of its transportation system. Germany inflicted the most horrible punishment upon men with whom Hitler differed politically or religiously. For this, Germany has already suffered destruction unmatched in modern times, and the penalties of the peace treaty are still to come. Yet the German attitude today is a curious one.

The people of Munich profess to know nothing of the bestial cruelties and the scientific murders practiced during twelve years at Dachau. The people of Weimar, the lovely city that is honored by the memory of Goethe, Germany's greatest poet, say they did not know what was happening at Buchenwald. In all probability they did not know the details. Visitors were not allowed.

When we questioned the Germans of the vicinity of the camps and also those in the Ruhr, they denied both knowledge and responsibility. Most seemed curiously detached. Obviously, they must have seen the emaciated men who were sent out as slave laborers to work in their fields or munitions factories. It is unconceivable that they learned nothing of what was going on from the men who were sent out daily. The Germans we saw outside the prison camps, and excepting those in the Ruhr industrial areas, were themselves fat, well fed and well clothed.

The detached attitude of the Germans toward the crimes committed in the concentration camps was remarkable. On the table of the reception room in the gas execution chamber at Dachau was a vase of withered flowers. In front of the crematory there were flowering shrubs and beds of freshly tended strawberries. The vegetable garden extended close to the edges of the little enclosures within which men were bound and shot to death.

Hard by the crematory and gas chamber was a brick barn in which stout German horses were stabled. Each horse had a spacious box stall in contrast to the murderous crowding of the prisoners' barracks. On the stall posts were painted the names of the farm horses. On the walls were colorful landscapes of the Bavarian countryside.

On the desk of the commandant of the entire camp there were withered flowers. In his desk drawer was a broken blue Easter egg, doubtless a reminder of a little child. Yet the same men who enjoyed the flowers, pampered the horses and treasured the memento of a child were responsible for the operation of this dreadful camp. Nazism does queer things to the human spirit.

That the civilian population could have done anything to improve the condition or the treatment of the men in the concentration camps may, however, be doubted. For the concentration camps were first built to imprison Germans feared or distrusted by the Nazis. In truth, the Nazis appeared to have destroyed or intimidated into silence any possible political opposition in Germany. That is why they did not surrender after they had lost the war. That is why German cities had to be bombed to rubble.

What, practically, can the United States, Great Britain, France and Russia do to prevent a repetition of these horrors? By the surrender terms, we and our allies will occupy Germany for an indefinite number of years. Many suggestions have been made. The worst perhaps is that we do to the Germans what they have done to the people upon whom they sought to impose their will. Of course, that will not be done.

The question of how to avoid a recurrence of these cruelties and of even greater barbarities, should a third World War come, obsesses all who witnessed what has actually happened: our own Army leaders, members of the Congressional delegation, members of the French and Belgian governments and others.

American soldiers who have seen what the Germans did are grim and determined. Some of them would execute all the guilty. Of course, they will hold to the rule of individual and personal responsibility, and the men already executed have been proved guilty. But all agree that promiscuous killing is not an enduring answer.

The question is how to make the surviving Germans peaceful. The French might take that part of the Saar in which at least half of the population is already French. The Belgians want to see Germany divided. Both want Germany to be occupied and divided until Germany is peaceful and democratic and not a threat to other peoples and nations.

An Object Lesson to Mankind

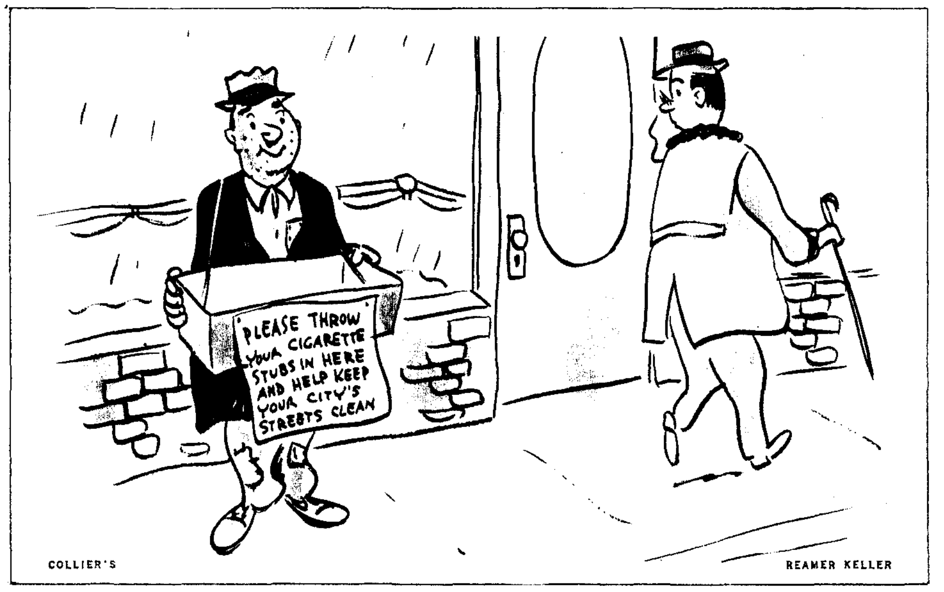
Obviously, the journalists who witnessed the horrors, the insanities and the mass killings of the concentration camps for political prisoners, would not be expected to say how to make the Germans peaceful, democratic and safe neighbors. But I am certain that what we saw in the horror camps showed us how *not* to re-educate the Germans. Hitler explored to the bitter and horrible end his own method of changing man's beliefs and principles. He and his gang thought of all the cruelties and practiced them. Whatever we do won't be in his footsteps. For if we did, we, too, would have lost the war.

The great hope implied by the French and the Belgians is that during the years of occupation by Americans, British, French and Russians, the Germans will themselves acquire new ideals.

Many Germans will have to die before Germany is willing sincerely to renounce conquest as the way to national prosperity and glory. If we keep control long enough, a different and better Germany may emerge. The Germany of Goethe and Beethoven was no threat to civilized men.

Certain it is that German science and German industry will design and produce no V-2 bombs, no multipurpose long-range guns and no other tool of catastrophe while the Allied powers control all of German industry and German science. We have the time and the authority to create a new environment in Germany during the years of occupation. Large-scale German industry and industrial science may not be restored unless we finance it. Doctor Edward Houdremont, the Nazi from Luxembourg who was the managing director of the Krupp works at Essen, told us that the Krupp family could finance the rebuilding of the Krupp works. That seemed foolishly sanguine to our group. Great Britain, France, Russia and the United States can decide that question, and we don't have to give the Germans of the next generation the weapons with which to assault our children and our grandchildren.

THE END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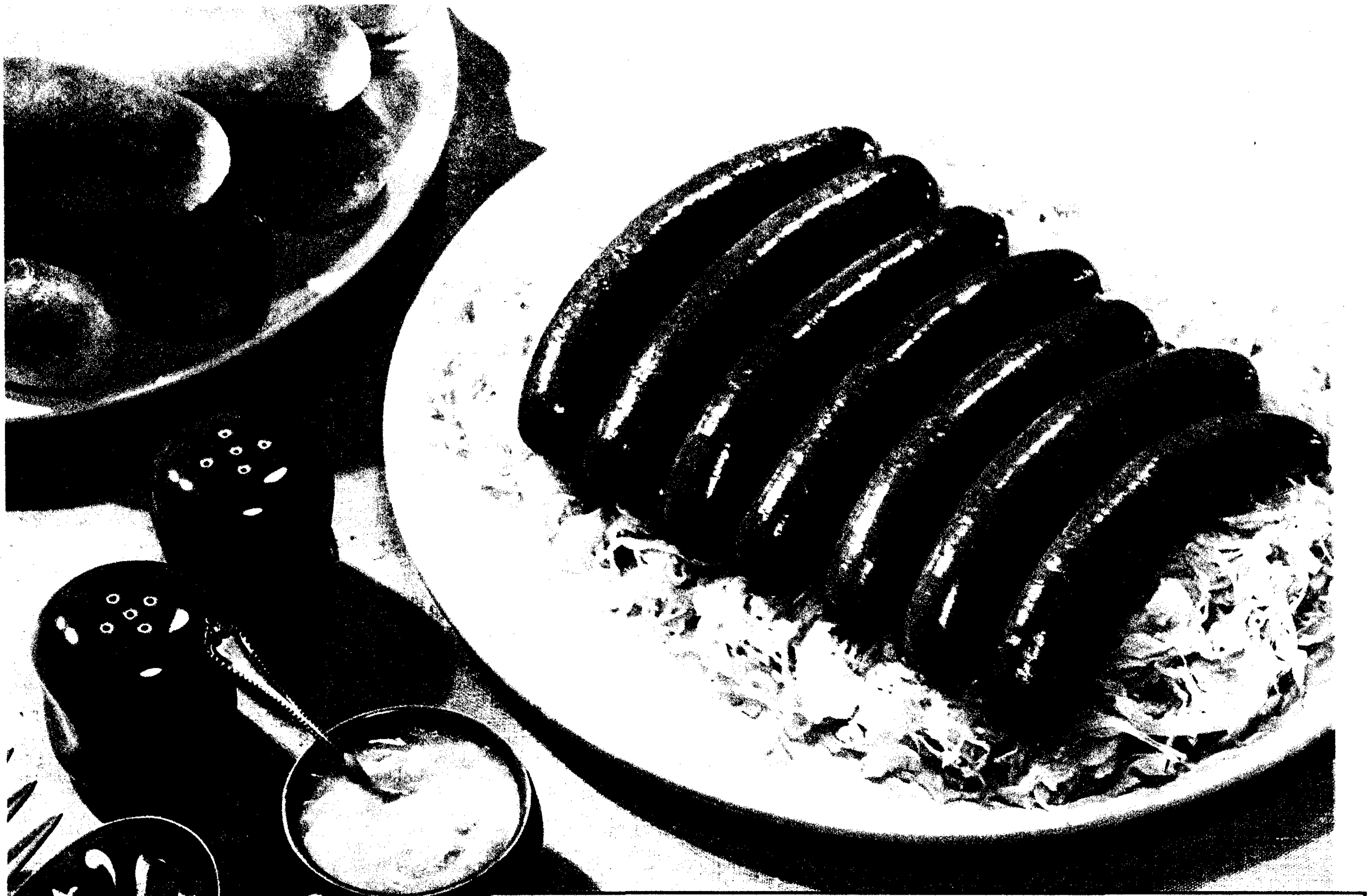

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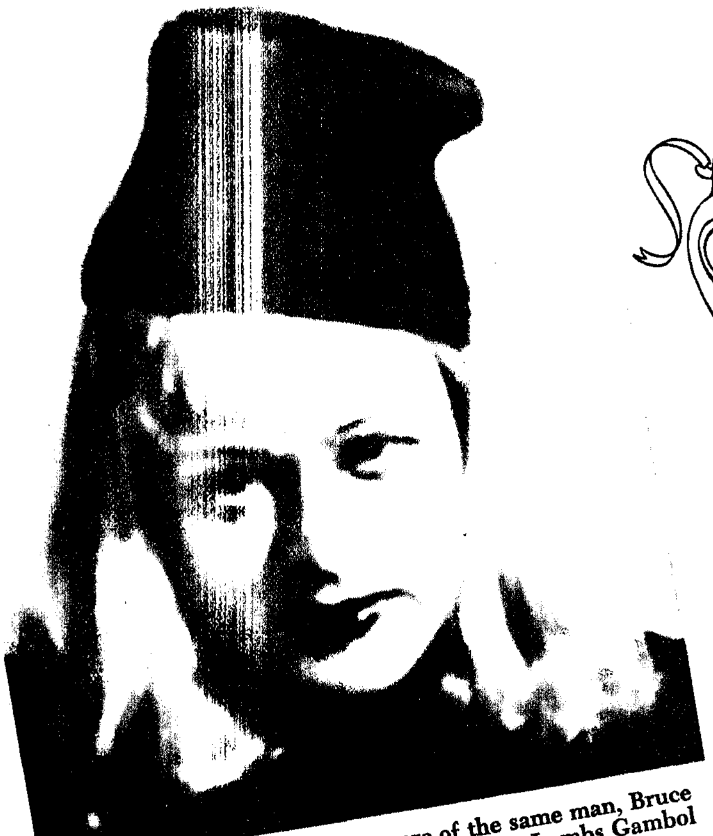


The faces on this page are of the same man, Bruce Evans. Here he is as a hussy in the Lambs Gambol

Evans' Faces

BY ROBERT BELLAIRE

BRUCE EVANS, Broadway's man of a million faces, really has no face at all. At least, not one that anyone seems to remember. One of the Main Stem's last heavy make-up actors, Evans has appeared in movies, vaudeville, stock, and on Broadway for more than twenty years. Right now he's playing in Olsen & Johnson's New York comedy hit, Laffing Room Only—establishing some sort of record by holding down nine different parts.

Yet no one ever recognizes Evans in a Broadway crowd or night club, or on the streets of Omaha or Hollywood. Backstage, without make-up, he's eternally being mistaken for an electrician or a stagehand, and to avoid embarrassment all around, he long ago quit taking curtain calls at the end of a show. Without make-up no one knew him. He received less applause than the ushers.

"From the make-up viewpoint," Evans says, "I have a perfect face. It impresses no one because it's absolutely blank. But that's about the greatest asset a character actor can have. If his nose is too large or his mouth too broad or his eyes set too far apart, there isn't much he can do about it. But if he has small, undistinguished features like mine, he can make himself look like anyone."

To prove this, Evans has successfully impersonated more than 200 national and international celebrities, ranging all the way from Churchill and the Duke of Windsor to Hitler and Popeye the Sailor; and he's done almost as many female impersonations as male—everything from Gypsy Rose Lee to the Dionne quintuplets.

Five years ago, Evans, then 38, played the part of an 80-year-old preacher one week and adolescent Henry Aldrich the next. Some school children who saw the Aldrich show were asked to vote on Evans' age. The result: 16, going on 17.

Less skeptical of Evans' ability, Oscar Hammerstein II hired him for Very Warm for May even before the play was finished. "I don't know which part I'll give you," he said, "but I know you can play any of them."

In his enthusiasm, Hammerstein eventually gave Evans five parts—until the first rehearsal found Evans meeting himself coming on and off stage, and engaging in long conversations with himself before the footlights.

"I guess we'll have to hire some more actors," Hammerstein said.

A Waiter in Any Language

A favorite pastime with Evans is to portray a minor role, such as that of a waiter, in a different nationality every night—dialect, make-up, costume and all; cockney, Russian, German, Scotch, Chinese, *ad infinitum.*

This versatility is never fully appreciated by the audience, which sees only a single performance, or by serious stars who are suddenly unnerved by the unexpected appearance of Chan or Ivan in place of their usual attendant, Tony. But Evans believes this sort of thing keeps him out of a rut. He also has a mania for playing incongruous roles—roles which would be impossible in real life. In Laffing Room Only, for example, he commands a firing squad which executes a murderer whose victim has been Evans himself, playing another role earlier in the show.

Offstage, Evans is a man of almost as many personalities as faces. An intense, voluble man beneath the nondescript surface, his trademark is a tattered, brown brief case from which he's literally inseparable, and whose contents present a fair cross-section of his wide interest and activity in all thing theatrical, literary, musical and military greasy make-up rags, an unfinished play o his own, several original sketches, a shaggy red mustache, a collection of his own poems a book on gardening (Evans' specialty: apartment roof gardens), an adaptation of a play for radio, a woman's wig, an unfinished novel lyrics for a new swing tune, several drawings of assorted ancient British regimenta uniforms, etc.

After identifying and painting more than 500 such uniforms in minutest detail, Evans is recognized as one of the world's leading authorities on British military regalia. In the first World War, he spent three months in the Canadian army before being discharged for "excessive immaturity." He had volunteered at fifteen.

Evans first discovered his unique powers of deception while attending his native state university at Lawrence, Kansas, in 1922. His parents were expecting him to emerge a member of the bar, but he suddenly developed an obsession for nose putty, grease paint, wigs and whiskers.

And his first public appearance, in the role of a filthy, disheveled tramp, was made on a larger stage than Evans has ever played since —the main street of Lawrence.

Jugged for Everything

Evans was a sensation. Frantic parents corraled their precious young. Cursing farmers wrestled with their shying horses. Packs of hysterical dogs howled madly at his heels. A constable took one look at Evans and pronounced him under arrest, not for vagrancy, but for robbery, auto theft, arson, rape and window peeping.

"I never forget a face," said the proud constable. The officer didn't laugh when he learned Evans' true identity.

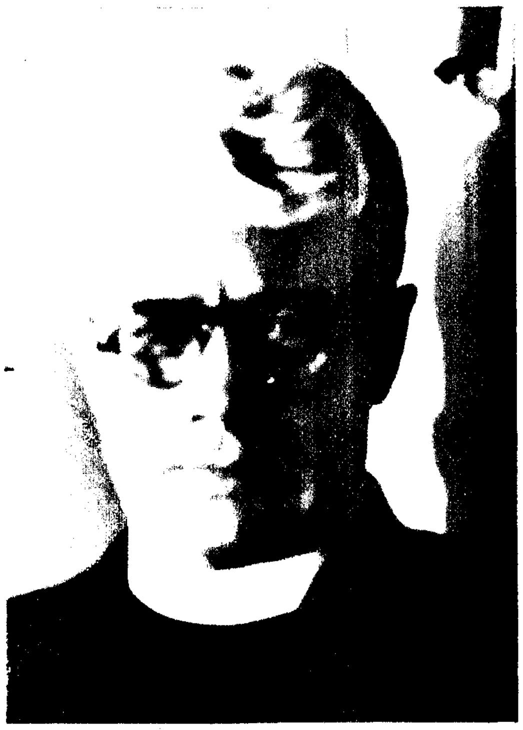
Evans was drawn to Cornell, where Prof. Alexander Drummond's dramatic club was then training such aspiring young actors as Franchot Tone and such promising playwrights as Erskine Caldwell. Here Evans studied three years, except for summers with New England stock companies.

Broadway never did decide exactly what Evans looks like without make-up. One producer always sent for him when he had a prize-fighter part to be filled, and would have him for no others. Another producer considered him effeminate and cast him only as an interior decorator or fashion designer. In movies, Evans' parts apparently were picked out of a hat: gangster, orchestra leader, priest, fisherman, doctor, reporter, tramp.

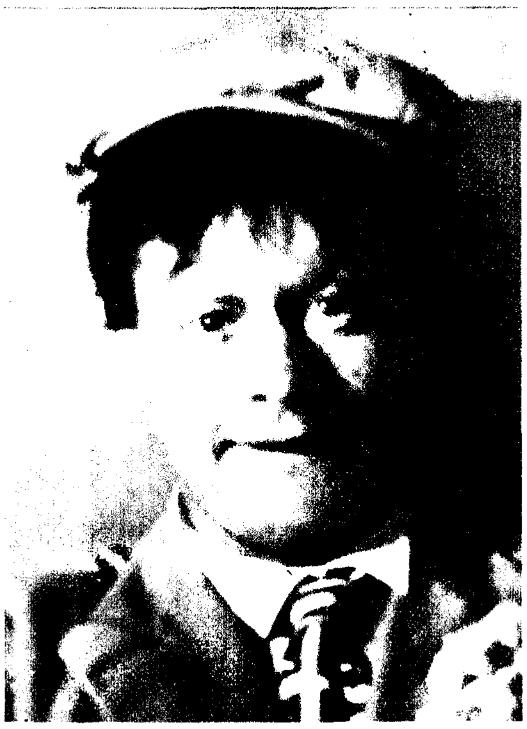
He's been clocked doing a complete change of character in 30 seconds, and 2-minute changes are routine. That's why he can hold down as many as nine parts in a single show. It explains why two men had to be hired to replace him when he retired from Sons O' Fun last season after 770 performances.

But Evans is no speed demon in original preparation for his parts, especially when they are impersonations of real-life characters. He spends days in libraries, newspaper and magazine offices, studying every available photograph and description of his subject. It has been said that Mrs. Evans and their daughter sometimes do not see him unmasked for several days. Only when Evans has finally found what he wants does he begin to think of streamlining for ease and speed.

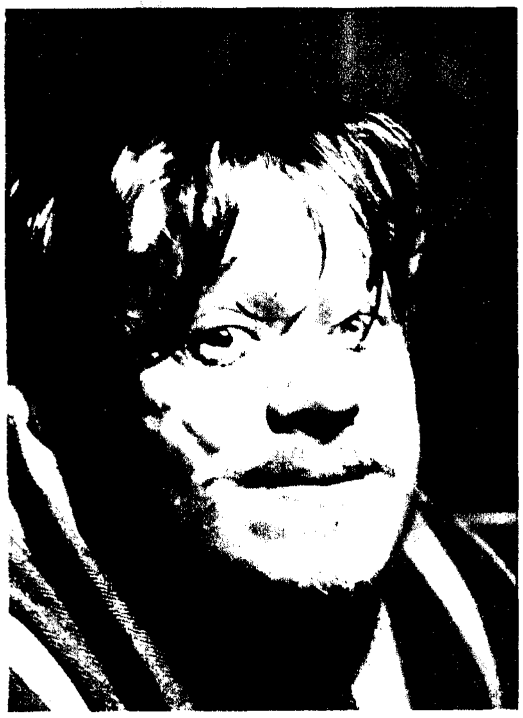
Last season, Evans tried his own face in Mrs. Kimball Presents. This turkey folded in five days. It could have been the play, of course. ★★★



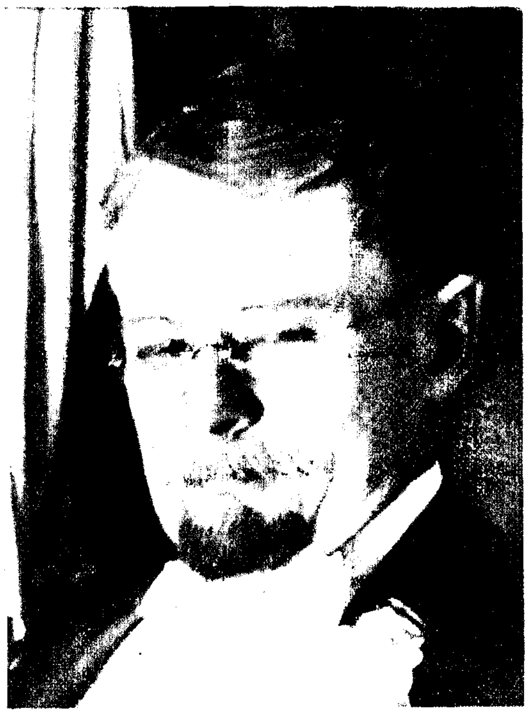
As a clergyman in a summer stock play



As "Honest William" in The Drunkard



As "Mr. Hyde" in Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde



As "Jonathan Foster" in Crime Marches On

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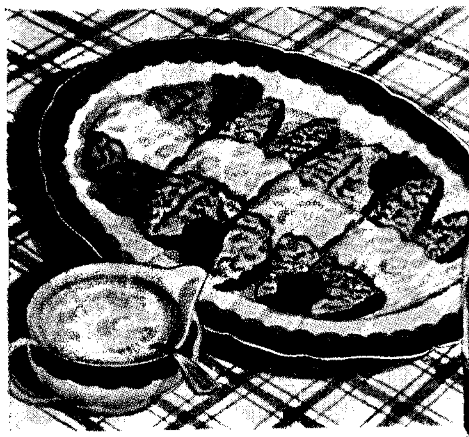

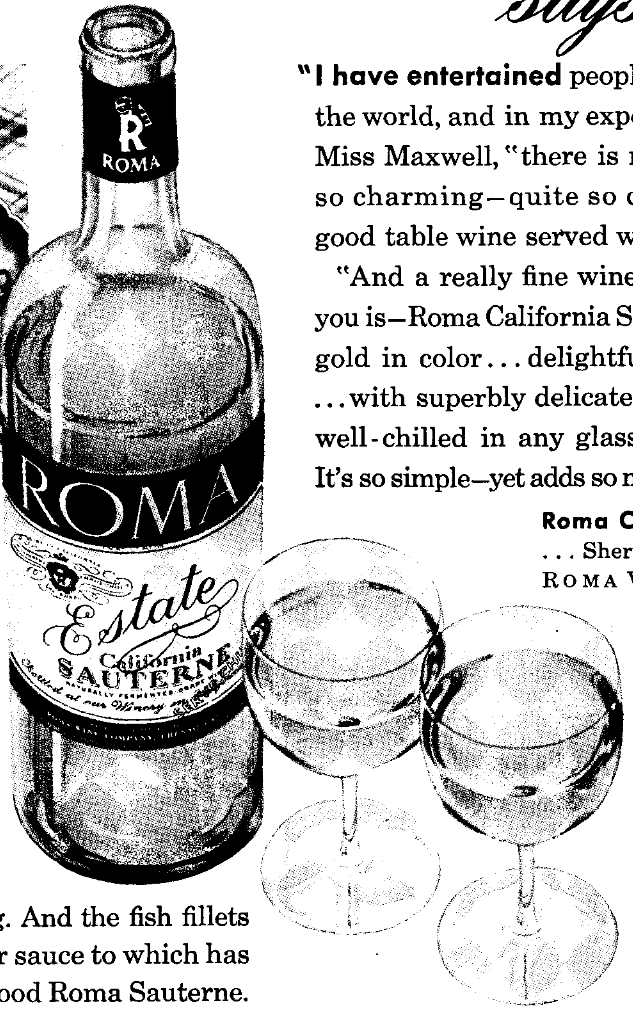

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MORE AMERICANS ENJOY ROMA THAN ANY OTHER WINE

Woman at Bay

Continued from page 23

Vichy government—that was at the time Germany agreed to release some French soldiers if other boys and men were exchanged to work in Germany. One of the boys is still there. The other is dead. Victor's sister doesn't know anything about it except that one day a card came announcing it."

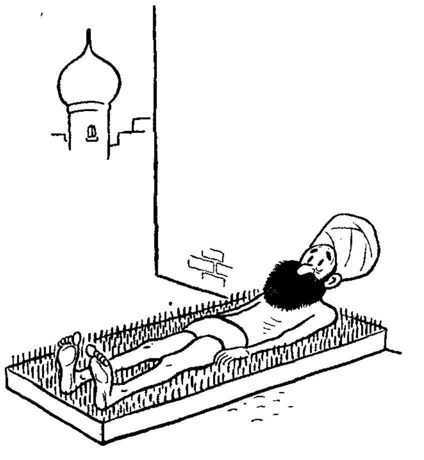
She leaned back, folding her hands. "I told Victor about the manuscript, and he was bitter about what the government had done to his sister, and he saw what the manuscript might do. That is why he helped me and took the manuscript out of France, to Lisbon where he was stationed."

MacKinnon continued to watch the sky outside the window, the excitement growing in him. Then why didn't you turn it over to the State Department in Lisbon? he wanted to say. But he waited.

"He helped me get out of France," Norma said presently. "I got to Madrid. It was quite a while before the proper arrangements could be made, and when I had the necessary visas, I waited until I got word from Victor to come to Lisbon. Then one day, word came. It was to be a simple matter now. I would arrive and meet him somewhere and get the manuscript and then I would take it to the American consul and it would be all over."

She sighed and there was distance in her gaze. Her mouth twisted ironically.

"The day before I arrived," she said. "Victor was sent to North Africa on some assignment. He left an envelope for me. There were papers and passage on the Corrubedo leaving the following day, and a letter. I don't know yet what he found out, but it was something that made him think it was not safe for me to stay in Lisbon, and the letter said he would not permit me to attempt to deliver the manuscript alone; that was why he had not left it for me. He had already booked space on the Corrubedo, since this was the first ship out, and he promised to bring the manuscript to Cuba for me.



COLLIER'S

"He said he was flying home in two weeks and he could come by way of Havana. If I attempted to stay in Lisbon until he got back from North Africa I would very likely be killed, but if I could once get to Cuba, I could deliver the manuscript to the embassy here." She looked up. "What would you have done?"

MACKINNON was not prepared to answer. The sudden digression startled him a bit and he said, "I don't know."

"Neither did I." Norma stood up and walked across the room, her brow furrowed and her eyes baffled, as though in her mind she was again faced with the decision. "I was worried sick. But I knew he wouldn't have written that way unless he thought it was the right thing for me to leave. And I knew that after all my trouble, I wasn't going to get myself killed until after I'd turned that manuscript over. I was a traitor in the eyes of the world, and that was something I had to clear up first."

She laughed softly and without humor. "It sounds a little silly now, telling it here in this room. But it wasn't very funny in Lisbon, being all alone and not knowing what to do."

MacKinnon believed her. It did not bother him that her story of what happened in Lisbon seemed a little involved, because there was proof now that Victor Molina had been right.

"I couldn't take you with me yesterday," she said, "because Victor wanted no witnesses when he handed over that manuscript; he had to protect himself and his career. He would not allow me to come to his consulate here, nor would he come to see me. That's why I wanted two keys."

SHE sat down on the edge of the bed and said, "I sent one to him by messenger. Then when I was ready to leave—I went early because I wanted to phone Victor from downtown and I wanted to walk around a little and be sure I wasn't followed—Denny Clarke insisted I ride with him, and that was all right until he made me go with him while he picked out material for a suit. I finally got away from him and I got to the hotel on time—"

"Oh, while I think of it," MacKinnon interrupted, and went on to tell her the story he had given Rodriguez about their being together the afternoon before, so that she would be prepared for his check-up on it.

She nodded, but her thoughts were evidently still with Molina, and when she took up her story again, despair muffled her words. "It was to have been so simple," she said. "After all the trouble and planning, it was finally to happen. When Victor left, I was to phone you and stay locked in the room till you came." She glanced up and held his gaze.

"It was still important somehow that you know the truth. I don't know why, I only know that was how I felt, that somehow I had to prove to you that I was no traitor. Perhaps I thought—you being a writer—that maybe you could write something about it so that people would know I wasn't really a collaborationist. I wanted Dad's friends to know that his daughter was—"

Her voice broke and he saw the tears start, then he was on his feet, a curious pressure in his throat.

"Hey," he said.

She shook her head bravely. "I'm all right," she said, and tried to smile.

He had no intention of going to her, but he did. He pulled her to her feet and put his hands on her arms. He drew her closer and she did not struggle, but stood there, her face hidden, her forehead touching his shoulder.

He thought of something she had said yesterday; he had thought about it last night. He had gone away six years ago, stiffly, his pride injured, all effort expended in trying to convince her by logic alone. "If you had only babied me a little, or even taken me over your knee . . ."

Now, a little surprised that he should feel that way, he knew it was again time to baby her a little, and it was a nice thing to know. He glanced over her shoulder, seeing the breakfast table now, remembering other breakfasts in front of a window.

Not like this, with the Gulf of Mexico outside, just rooftops and chimney pots and a narrow alley between two buildings where you could see the lone tree standing above the river's bank. MacKinnon's tree, they called it, and though it was part of a long row, they could see only this one from the window. Once, after they identified it, he started to carve his initials in it and a gendarme chased them away. . . .

He believed her now. He had to believe her. He realized what she had suffered and it did something to him, thinking of her courage and determination and all the difficulties she had faced alone for so long. Shame and humility and something else he did not understand left him shaken and repentant, and then, gradually, a slow excitement began to churn within him.

He still had a job to do, but he did not have to be a heel now, or kid himself about Norma. For his job and hers were the same; no matter who got the manuscript they would go to the embassy together.

"Look," he said. "What we've been doing to each other doesn't make much sense any more. Maybe we ought to give ourselves a break. Maybe we ought to start from scratch—as of now."

He felt her start to draw away, but he did not want to look at her yet. He held on and said, "I've been thinking of some things you said yesterday. When I was twenty-four, I guess I wasn't very profound, either. I guess I could have done a lot better myself."

"I've been thinking, too," Norma said against his chest. "I talked to Denny and I found out how long you were in the hospital and in prison. It wasn't your fault, Paul. I suppose I made myself think so afterward because there was no one else to blame and I hadn't the courage to blame myself." She drew back and looked at him. "I'd like to start from scratch—if you would."

He looked into her green eyes and in their warm depths he found his answer and suddenly everything was wonderful. It was perfect. Almost. Of course, there was the little matter of the manuscript, but even as he thought of this, some of the glow remained. He had a sudden impatience to get going.

"All right," he said. "We'll get that thing back."

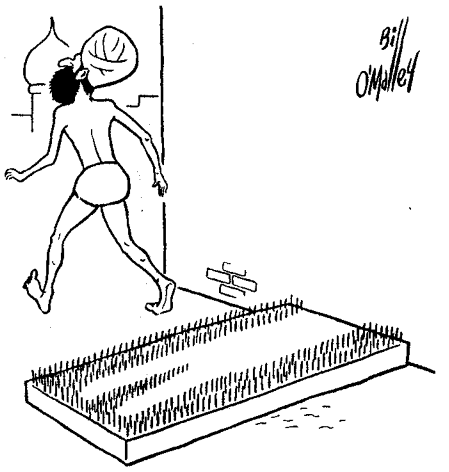
Her lashes came up, and a tiny smile, still uncertain but nonetheless real, appeared at the corners of her mouth.

"Do—do you really think so?" she breathed.

"Sure," he said. "Already I've got an idea." He stepped to the telephone and asked the hotel operator to get him *El Sol*. Presently he was connected with the newspaper and, learning that Leon Vidal was not in, left word for the reporter to call him back.

Norma was still watching him. "What are you going to do?"

"Check up on a couple of things." He paused, finding a hole or two in his idea now, but closing his mind against them. "I've got a hunch," he said. "That's all it is but—look, you don't think you were followed? . . . Well, suppose Molina wasn't followed either. Then how would anyone know about room 319?"



BILL O'MALLEY

Her eyes, still wide, were no longer smiling. She shook her head, and he said:

"Suppose someone knew you had a key to room 319 at the Palm Hotel? Don't ask me how, but it could happen. If anyone found out, he might be curious as to what was going to happen in room 319, particularly if he was interested in what you are doing in Havana. How could that someone find out?"

"I don't know, Paul."

He grinned. "Maybe I can find out," he said. "Relax." He started for the door, feeling high and confident and, for some strange reason, tremendously relieved.

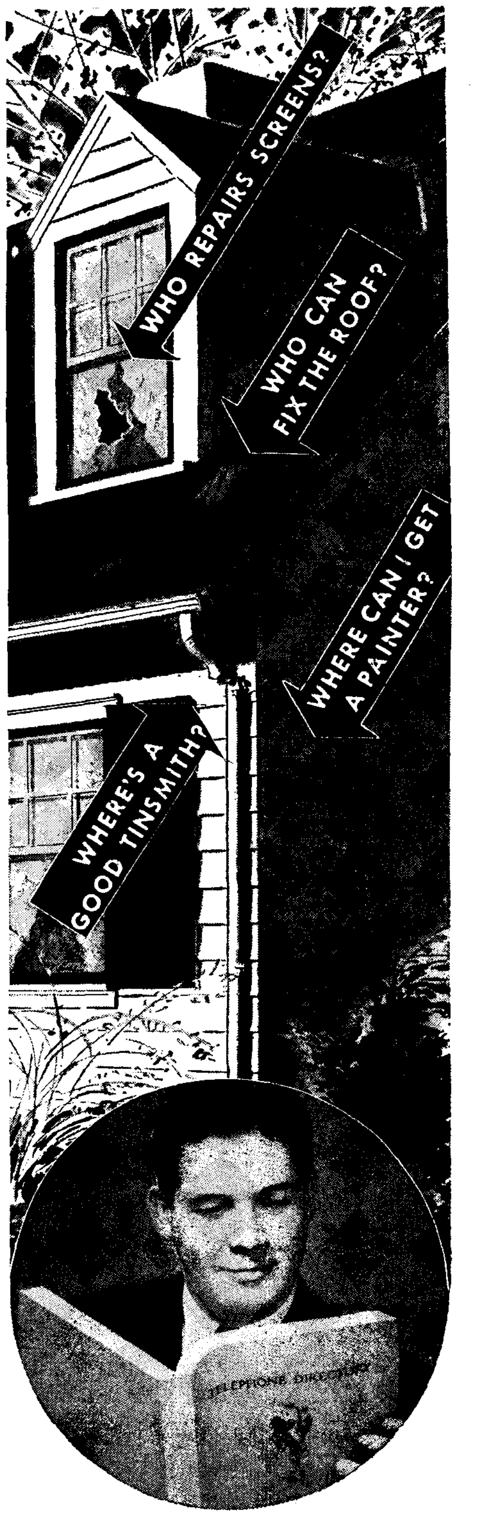
LEON VIDAL'S plump, familiar figure scurried into the lobby shortly after Paul MacKinnon arrived at the Palm Hotel. He could tell by the gleam in the little man's eyes that Leon had information.

"It is done," he said, in his usual breathless way. "As you asked."

"Swell," MacKinnon said. "Here, let's sit down."

Vidal glanced at the wall clock and set his wrist watch. "I had to go out," he said. "This varies many minutes each day, and I was afraid I would be late. . . . Yes," he said happily, perching on the edge of his chair. "For me it was what you call routine. I am well known to all the hotel clerks and they are anxious to co-operate."

"You didn't tell anyone why you wanted the information?"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Get help in the Classified

"He's coming home!
—he says to have the car in good shape"

"HE'S COMING HOME!" . . . three words that make every mother's heart beat with joy . . . three words that spell an end to dad's anxiety. And when that smiling, uniformed figure swings off the train, you can bet mother and dad will be there with the car to meet him. "Have the car in good shape" . . . he says. Well, we all know what that means. Naturally he'll be as happy to see the folks as they are to have him home, but then there's Jane, who lives in a suburb clear across town. He'll need the car to get there . . . and of course you can't expect young folks to stay home *every* night. So, dad, perhaps you had better drop the car off tomorrow on your way downtown and have it lubricated and the oil changed. Nothing's too good for *that* boy!

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"Oh, no. I do not even know myself. But this I find out for you: Between the hours of ten yesterday morning and four in the afternoon, two rooms are rented in the front corridor of the third floor. Not counting room 319," he added enigmatically.

"So—"

"Room 327 is rented to a Mr. Marti and wife from Oriente. Room 322 is rented to a Mrs. Claire Roche, Miami, Florida."

MacKinnon made a mental map of the third-floor hall and saw room 322 diagonally across from 319. Then, not knowing anything about Mrs. Roche, he felt his interest quicken with the growing premonition that his hunch was right. 322 would be a perfect spot from which to observe the comings and goings in room 319.

"Is Mrs. Roche here now?"

"No one has seen her since. She paid in advance for one day and took the key."

"What did she look like?"

Leon shrugged. "Who can say? The clerk believes she was blond. With this the doorman agrees."

"Doorman?"

"Yes." Leon Vidal's plump face cracked in a grin. "I know you want me to be thorough so I ask him also. He can recall only that a blond woman came at this time and left shortly afterward and got into a car which was waiting. He remembers this much because he saw her get out of this car which parked down the street. It was driven by a blond man."

MacKinnon batted this around in his mind, finding himself badly confused about the woman but having a somewhat better idea about the man.

"Did the doorman say if he was big—this blond guy?"

"He did not say, though I could ask." Leon started to get up.

MacKinnon put out his hand. "Wait a minute."

Leon watched him, and MacKinnon leaned back, his gaze fixed on the street outside the windows as he considered how best to follow up his lead.

Presently he stirred himself and remembered where he was. He took out some bills and selected a five.

Leon drew back, shocked. "Please," he said. "This is not a thing one does for money. For you, I—"

"I know," MacKinnon said, and grinned. "Don't look so shocked. This is for the doorman or anyone else you find that can remember what the blond woman looked like and if the blond man who waited was big. You can do it better than I can," he said. "If I start nosing around, it might make somebody suspicious, but you—"

"Yes," Leon said. "With Leon Vidal, no one is suspicious." He took the bill and looked at it a moment and now a new note crept into his voice, leaving it sober and less breathless.

"I have heard," he said, "that there was a murder in the Palm Hotel. Unfortunately, there is much secrecy concerning this information." He hesitated, glanced up. "Would you know anything about such a rumor, Mr. MacKinnon?"

IT OCCURRED to MacKinnon then that he was asking for a lot of confidence and not giving much in return. Furthermore, he liked this little guy.

"You mean off the record?" he said. "Between friends?"

"Yes. Leon Vidal, your friend, asks you this."

"Okay. The answer is yes. I can't tell you much, but I can tell you the rumor is based on fact."

Leon Vidal seemed instantly relieved. "I knew if this was so, you would tell me. Now that I know I have your confidence, I can tell you that in my inquiries I found also that room 319 was rented yesterday morning by a John Macy. It occurred to me that this John Macy might be you."

"Do you know Luis Rodriguez?"

"Oh, yes. He is a clever one."

"Yeah," MacKinnon said dryly. "And Mr. Rodriguez is another who has an idea that MacKinnon knows something about room 319."

Vidal's eyes widened, and MacKinnon gave him a reassuring slap on the knee and made his voice confident: "Don't let it worry you, Leon. Maybe if this thing works out right, you'll have a story."

"Me." Vidal tapped his chest. "Alone?"

"Exclusive. Leon Vidal and *El Sol*. That is, if I have anything to say about it—though I'm not sure I will." He stood up. "See what you can get from the doorman. I'll see you later," he said and walked away, his mind turning at once to a big blond man named Denny Clarke.

BACK at his hotel MacKinnon made sure that Clarke was in the pool and then rode to the fourth floor. There was a foyer opposite the service elevators shut off from the main corridor where the employees went to sneak smokes, and MacKinnon found two boys in the midst of such a pleasure and asked if either had keys.

When one nodded, MacKinnon took him down the hall to Clarke's room, produced a dollar and pantomimed the unlocking of the door. The boy grinned, one eye on the bill, and MacKinnon decided that if he intended to keep on with this sort of thing, he could save time by having a key made. When the boy took the bill and went away, MacKinnon closed the door and got to work.

He was not sure what he expected to find. He did not think Clarke would be fool enough to keep the manuscript in the room, even if he had it, but he was looking for anything at all that might give him another lead and he was not fussy about his methods.

There was, he saw, no trunk but three bags: a kitbag, an oversized pigskin suitcase and an overnight bag. This last was locked, but the other two were not, and he soon found out they were empty, so he started in on the bureau drawers.

He found nothing at all here that interested him, so he went back to the closets and searched the three suits and the sports jacket that hung there. In the pocket of this, he found some keys, tried the likely looking ones on the locked bag and found one that worked.

The first thing he saw was the gun, a well-oiled automatic similar to the one used on Victor Molina. The clip was full but he did not think the gun had been fired recently, so he put it aside and continued his search, finding several packets of personal papers: bills, some receipts, and a lot of letters which he scanned.

These were all from women, and the contents varied from expressions of exasperation to frank statements of undying devotion. There were two or three business letters which told him nothing of importance, and one long, bulky envelope which he opened with some excitement, only to discover that it was filled with snapshots and films, monotonously similar and picturing women in various poses. In some of these, Clarke's grinning countenance was the center of focus, and MacKinnon took one of these before he left.

In his own room once more, he lighted a cigarette and thought a little more about his luncheon date with Bruce Aitchison, and that brought him to the subject of Alfredo and Carlos and the chase the night before that did not quite come off. When he had exhausted this subject, he thought of something else, and his grin went away. He picked up the telephone again and called the American Embassy. When he had his connection he asked for Mr. Lanning.

"Paul MacKinnon," he said, when Lanning answered.

"I heard you were in town."

"From Dave Adams?"

"From several people."

"Do you know about that business at the Palm Hotel?"

"I know," Lanning said. "In certain circles, it is making quite a smell. There have been inquiries."

"From Luis Rodriguez?"

"Among others." Lanning paused but nothing changed in his flat, laconic voice. "You know what we have to tell them, don't you?"

"Sure."

"To us you're another tourist. What's on your mind?"

(Continued on page 36)

Packard-built Rolls-Royce engines power the Mustang fighter, Mosquito fighter-bomber, and Lancaster heavy bomber. U. S. Navy PT boats and Army rescue boats are powered by Packard super-marine engines. Packard has produced nearly 65,000 precision combat engines.

What every motorist can learn from a Mustang pilot

Every Mustang fighter pilot knows this simple truth . . .

. . . that *any* engine — even one built to such exacting standards as the Packard-built Rolls-Royce engine that powers his plane — requires periodic check-ups.

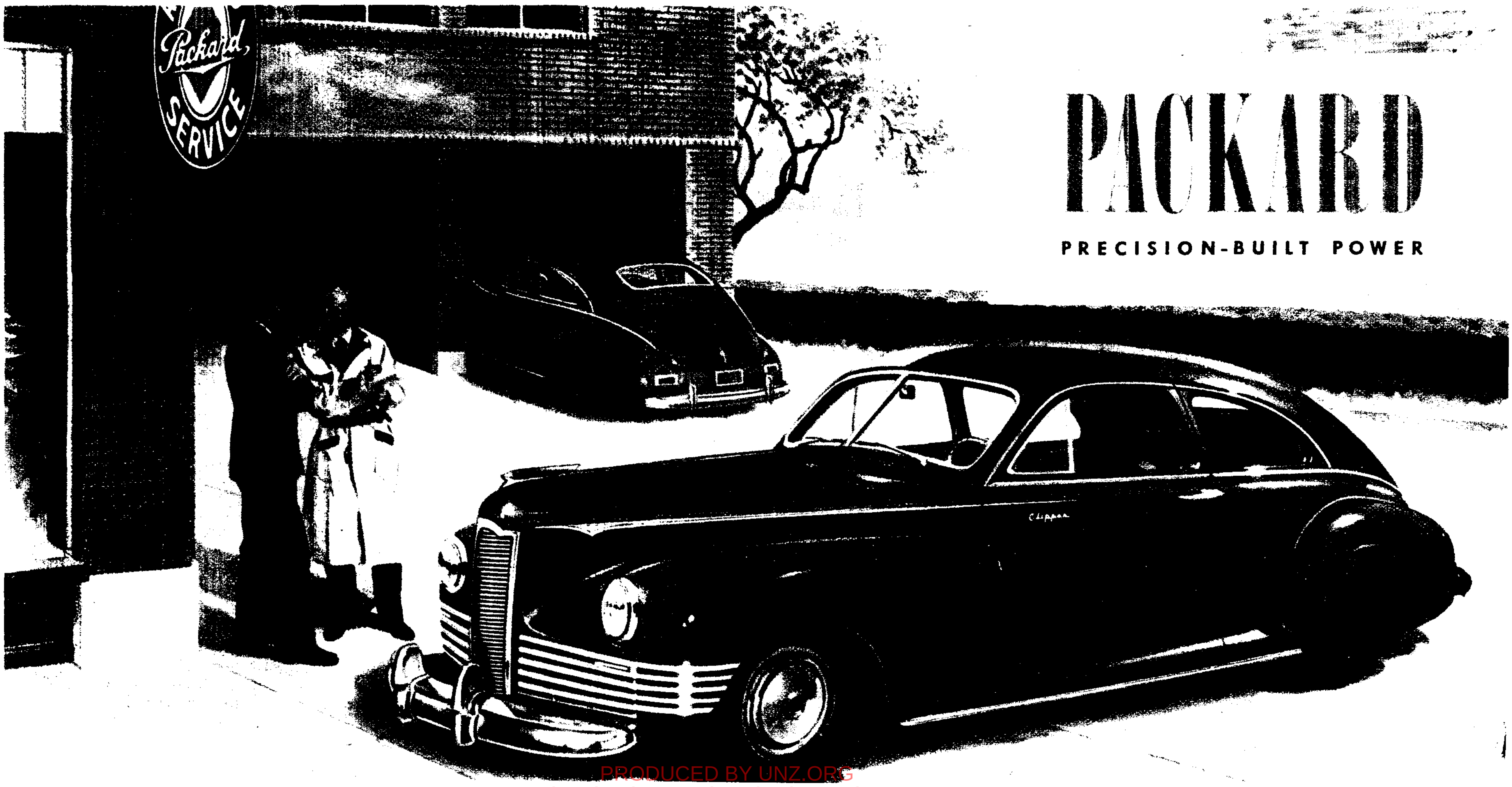
But a lot of motorists have forgotten that fact.

Today, in America, war-weary cars are going off the road, and into the nation's junk heap, at an alarming rate. Thousands of these cars could still be rolling, if their owners had taken just the ordinary precautions that can prolong a car's life.

Don't let *your* car join this "ghost-fleet." Go to your Packard dealer and have him check *little* troubles before they grow into *big* ones.

In short, for your own sake, and your country's sake, do everything you can to keep your car rolling. It may be longer than you think before you can buy a new one!

ASK THE MAN WHO OWNS ONE



PACKARD

PRECISION-BUILT POWER

THE Heroes

JOSÉ ABOULKER

XXXIV

THE loss of North Africa was blow enough in itself, but the Germans had the added bitterness of knowing that, to a large extent, the Allied victory was due to French patriots of Jewish faith and blood. How the Fuehrer must have screamed when he learned that the way to invasion had been paved by the courage and devotion of the Aboulkers, a family tracing back to the House of David.

Doctor Henri Aboulker, head of the clan, was not only a distinguished professor of medicine in the University of Algiers, but had been decorated time and again for bravery in the first World War. This record saved him when the Vichy government began its persecution of the Jews, for the Algerian authorities shrank from arresting a veteran whose breast was covered with medals that proved his love of France. Nevertheless, they warned him against any subversive activity, as he would be under closest observation.

An empty threat, for Doctor Aboulker started at once on the organization of a resistance movement. Too old himself for the active work, he turned it over to his nephews, José and Raphael. A drudging, dangerous business, for the Gestapo listened at every keyhole and spied on every home, jailing on suspicion, torturing and killing with brutality worthy of Berlin. But though many died, not one betrayed.

Although only twenty-two, young José Aboulker backed his daring with a cold, clear judgment that guarded against recklessness and indiscretion. Day and night, week after week, he slipped in and out of homes and towns, testing the loyalties of men and women, setting up secret commands and arranging for the collection and storage of weapons against the hour of uprising. All, cunningly enough, under cover of a loud-mouthed admiration for Pétain and Hitler.

A slow business, as well as perilous, for the swift and unbroken succession of German victories robbed the great majority of their hope and their spirit. After months of sweating effort, an army of one thousand was all that José could count on with any degree of confidence, and even these were a motley lot. A few army and navy officers, eager to join De Gaulle, a scattering of priests, but students, workers and tradesmen for the most part.

"But others will rise when we strike," José said.

As a result of his flaming enthusiasm, conversations were opened with Robert Murphy, the American Consul General, and in late October, 1942, lanky General Mark Clark made a midnight landing on the beach near Algiers. Twice during Clark's historic meeting with French army officers, the fate of the invasion hung by a hair. In some manner the suspicions of the Vichy police were aroused, and their sudden descent on the villa where the meeting was being held, compelled General Clark and his aides to hide in the cellar, before they finally made their escape.

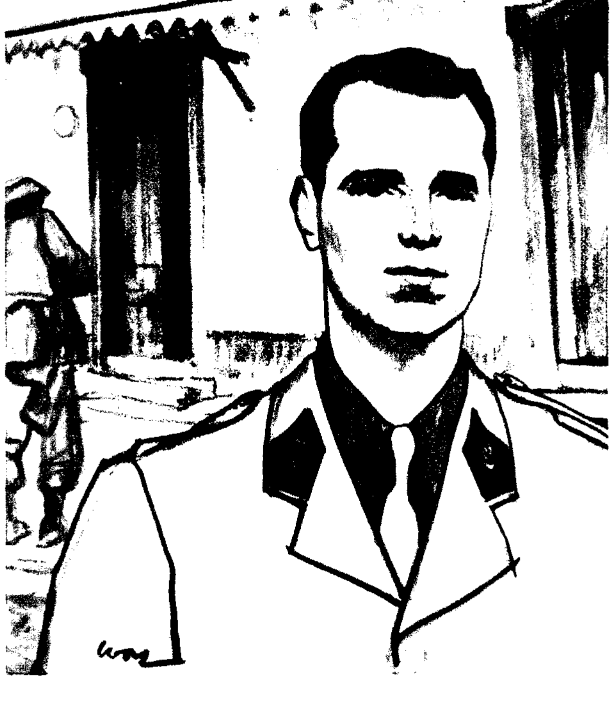
José Aboulker, as commander of the "shock troops," had his duties set forth in precise detail. His job, to begin two hours before the actual invasion, was the "complete immobilization of Algiers." All airfields were to be seized, all communication lines cut off, all radio stations taken over, and every Vichy official placed in "protective custody." By Saturday evening, November 7th, the young leader had completed his preparations, and the conspirators gathered in the home of Doctor Aboulker to await the signal.

A short-wave radio in the bathroom established contact both with the British fleet and General Eisenhower's headquarters in Gibraltar, and at ten o'clock came the flash that the Algiers landing was scheduled for one hour after midnight. Straightway, José raced his messengers into every quarter of the city, but by eleven o'clock, only 337 of the pledged one thousand had reported. No whit daunted, José led his dwindled band to the garage basement where arms were hidden, and gave the word to attack.

A pitifully small army with which to capture a city, and even more inadequate equipment, for all they had were several hundred obsolete muskets, one Sten gun and an automatic rifle. Headlong bravery, however, compensated for lack of numbers and weapons, and furious assaults gained control of the post office, telephone and telegraph facilities, power plants and other important nerve centers. Moreover, Admiral Darlan and the chief of the Secret Police and many lesser Vichyites were penned in their homes under guard.

José himself took charge of the central police station, and when precinct chiefs obeyed a call to report at once, he clapped them into cells. Along with this coup, he broadcast fake bulletins that told of the utter collapse of German and Italian resistance on both the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts. Street fighting took heavy toll of poorly armed, outnumbered patriots, but by dawn, José Aboulker's "army" had the Algiers situation well in hand. Allied troops, pouring in, mopped up, and nightfall saw the end of firing.

Today José Aboulker, one of a people whom Adolf Hitler doomed to extermination, sits in the Consultative Assembly in Paris, proud member of a body that will pass judgment on the so-called Master Race. . . . GEORGE CREEL



PORTRAIT BY WILLIAM AUERBACH-LEVY

Woman at Bay

Continued from page 34

"I'd like to see you this afternoon. Say around three; somewhere downtown."

Lanning decided he could make it and named a small café.

"Okay," MacKinnon said, "and when you come, bring a gun."

There was another pause and he thought he heard a sigh. "I hope you know what you're doing," Lanning said finally. "That Rodriguez could be bad news."

THE Paris did not look much like a restaurant, with its second-floor windows, ornamental iron railings and arched columns built flush with the curbing, but after the hot brightness of the street, it was cool inside.

When MacKinnon arrived, Bruce Aitchison was already waiting. He wore a white suit, double-breasted to magnify his natural body bulk, and his thin graying hair was plastered flat. He insisted on shaking hands and, this done, he nodded to the captain and was led to a table along the wall. There was a flurry of activity among the busboys and waiters, and two of these stood by while the captain took the order.

Aitchison glanced at the menu and said he could recommend the roast beef. "It's usually quite good here, if you like anything that heavy. For myself I'll have a salad."

MacKinnon said he'd have oysters, the beef and hearts of lettuce with French dressing, ice cream and iced coffee. "But first," he said, "I'd like a Martini. Very dry and made with imported gin."

The captain nodded and went away to confer with the two waiters.

Aitchison rubbed thick-fingered hands that looked recently manicured and smiled. Then in his jerky brusque voice he said, "First of all, I want to apologize for yesterday."

MacKinnon grinned inwardly and thought: Afternoon or evening? He put on what he thought was an expression of polite surprise and said, "Yesterday?"

"It was most distressing," Aitchison said. "If it hadn't been for my French guests. . . . I have nothing personal against Miss Travers, but I spent many years in France and I can understand how some of them are bound to feel. I talked it over with Marie—Mrs. Gerand—and we agreed that I owed you and the others an apology."

The Martini came and it was very good. A thin, tired-looking waiter hovered about, and Aitchison glanced round irritably and then stared pointedly until the fellow went away.

"You see," he said, "what I didn't know at the time was that you were once married to Miss Travers."

MacKinnon sipped his drink and drew back to let another waiter serve the oysters. When he glanced up, he saw Aitchison watching him, and he looked back at him, aware now that the man's eyes were light brown, with an amber sheen and about as much warmth as a pair of marbles.

"That's right," he said. "Who told you?"

Aitchison ignored that one. The salad came, and for a while they ate, and the conversation was restricted, as if by mutual consent, to remarks about the food and golf and the club and the races. When the table had been cleared, Aitchison lighted a cigar and got down to business.

"I'm going to ask you a question, Mr. MacKinnon," he said. "How are you fixed for money?"

"I've got a couple of dollars."

"You have been in Havana almost two weeks. You live well, you dress well, and you apparently are here for a holiday."

"That's my story," MacKinnon said. "I'm a writer. Maybe I'm getting some material."

"Umm." Aitchison chewed on his cigar, and his stare remained. "Would you say it was a coincidence that you should be here when a wife you haven't seen in years arrives from Lisbon?"

"That's what I'd call it."

"I've been wondering," Aitchison said. "I know something about Mrs. Sevigny and there's a remote possibility that she has something I want. If—"

"How remote?"

"I'm not sure about that, but I might arrange to have a sum of money paid to a man like you in return for the right sort of favor."

MacKinnon looked interested and he did not hurry. "I could use some money," he said. "Did you have any special amount in mind?"

"I was thinking about twenty-five thousand dollars."

"I never have much to sell," MacKinnon said, "except stories and manuscripts—things like that."

A dark gleam flickered in Aitchison's eyes. "I might be interested in buying the right sort of story."

"For yourself?"

"And my associates."

"I met some of your associates last night."

"I heard about it," Aitchison said, his tone suggesting this was a matter of no importance. "It was a mistake."

"Whose mistake?"

"Alfredo's. He handled it badly. I told him I wanted to see you. He was supposed to give you the invitation." Aitchison turned a hand and examined his nails. "Alfredo overdoes things at times. He has great enthusiasm for his work."

MACKINNON glanced idly about. He examined the walls and ceiling, as though interested in the decorative effect. About half the tables were occupied, and there were occasional sounds of dishes and silverware, but the general effect was one of quiet and restfulness.

"It's a nice place," he said. "One of the best in town."

"About that manuscript of yours," Aitchison said. "I might be interested."

"Okay."

"When can I hear from you?"

"I'll need a little time."

"How much?"

"Also," MacKinnon said, "more money. For fifty thousand dollars I'd be willing to do more talking. I might be able to locate a suitable manuscript."

Aitchison lowered one lid and his mouth twitched. He started to speak, and then his head lifted abruptly and he was glaring angrily over MacKinnon's shoulder.

He spoke in Spanish, but the words were hot and incensed. MacKinnon turned and saw the waiter at the serving table, not the thin, tired one but another. Now the man lowered his eyes, colored under Aitchison's tirade, and moved away.

It took Aitchison a few more seconds to recover his composure. He was still annoyed and trying not to show it when he continued to MacKinnon.

"One thing more," he said. "I am not joking, MacKinnon. And I'm not sure I like your attitude. But"—he waved the cigar—"I can give you until tonight to make up your mind."

"I'm not sure that's enough time," MacKinnon said.

"Then I will have to use other methods."

"Oh?"

"I will have to give Alfredo further instructions."

"About me?"

"And Miss Travers."

MacKinnon studied the other's narrowed gaze and found it cold and relentless. Aitchison was not bluffing.

"What good would that do?"

Aitchison sat back and signaled the waiter. When he glanced again at MacKinnon and took out his wallet, he wore a thin smile and his manner was meant to be affable.

"I'm merely suggesting possibilities," he said, examining the check and putting down a bill. "One cannot tell how much good they will do until one tries them. Are we ready?"

They rose and went out to the foyer. "It's been nice," Aitchison said.

"I enjoyed it," MacKinnon said. "Thanks a lot."

Aitchison wanted to know if he could take MacKinnon anywhere and when the offer was refused, he said, "I might be able to meet your terms, but as I told you before, the matter must be settled by tonight."

MacKinnon watched Aitchison climb into a heavy sedan that now wheeled over from its parking place in the square. Alfredo was driving, and MacKinnon waved to him. . . .

The café Tom Lanning had selected was an open-front affair overlooking Central Park, and MacKinnon, arriving a few minutes early for his appointment, selected a

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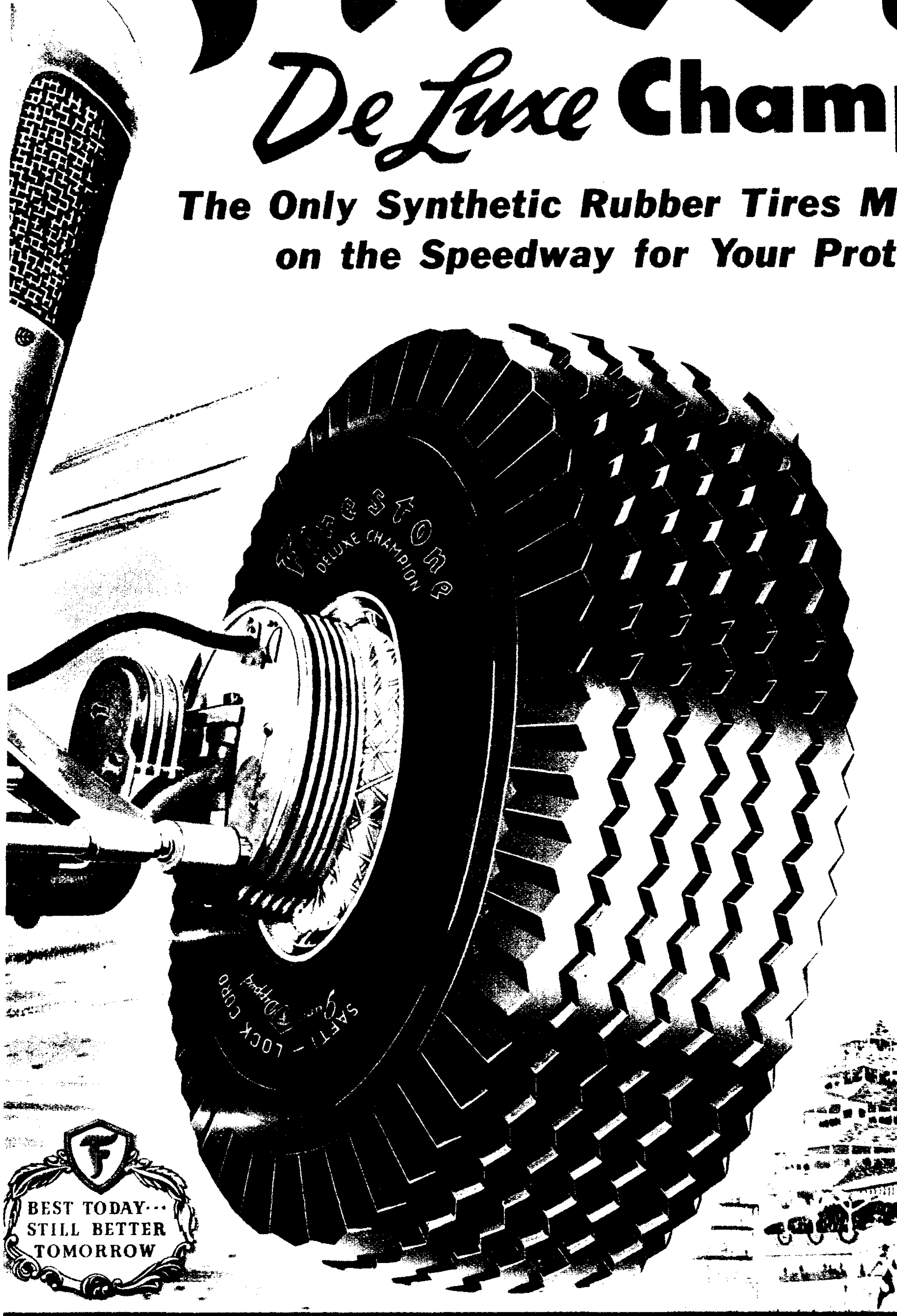

BEST TODAY···
STILL BETTER
TOMORROW

WILL synthetic rubber tires fail and cause accidents when the national 35-mile-an-hour speed limit is lifted? Not Firestone DeLuxe Champions! Wilbur Shaw proved that when he averaged 100.34 miles an hour for 500 miles on the famous Indianapolis Speedway. And the tires he used were *stock* Firestone DeLuxe Champions, the same as you can buy at any Firestone Dealer Store or Firestone Store.

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The tire shortage is still critical. Every car owner should observe the 35-mile-an-hour speed limit and all other tire conservation measures. And when you do buy new tires, be sure to get Firestone DeLuxe Champions, the only synthetic rubber tires made that are safety-proved on the speedway for your protection on the highway.

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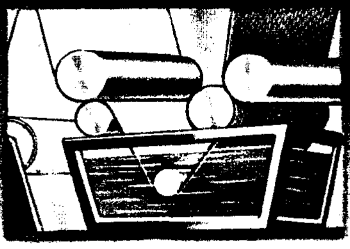
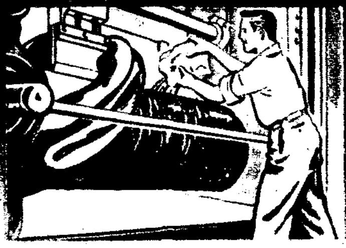
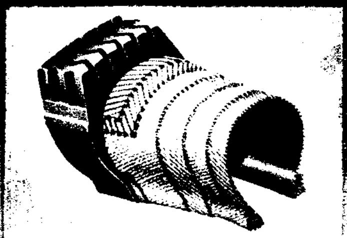


SAFTI-LOCK GUM-DIPPED CORD BODY. The long-staple cotton fibers of every cord are locked together for extra strength. These cords are then dipped in a special rubber solution for extra protection against blowouts.



VITAMIC RUBBER. The rubber used in both the tread and cord body contains Vitalin, a rubber vitamin developed by Firestone, which gives extra protection against weather and wear and keeps rubber live and tough.



SAFTI-SURED CONSTRUCTION. There are two major parts of a tire—tread and cord body. Safti-Sured Construction means that the tread and cord body are welded together inseparably into a unit of extra strength.

GEAR-GRIP TREAD. 3,456 sharp-edged angles in the tread design provide extra protection against skidding. Greater non-skid volume of rubber in the tread and greater tread width give extra traction and extra mileage.

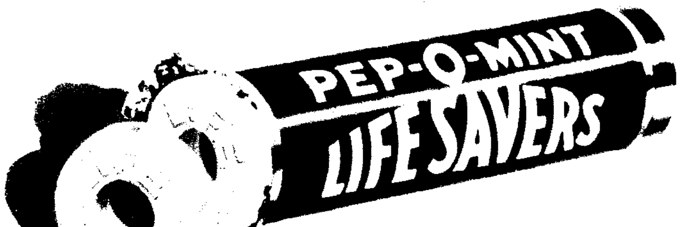
"KNOW-HOW." More than 40 years of experience in building quality tires and more than 20 years of working with synthetic rubber are your best guarantee of extra quality and extra performance in Firestone Tires.

When she shields you off like this . . .

Instead of shielding you in like this . . .

TRY THIS

***MORAL:* Everybody's breath offends sometimes. Let Life Savers sweeten and freshen your breath—after eating, drinking, and smoking.**



Pining for your favorite flavor? We're sorry if there aren't enough Life Savers to go around. But Servicemen come first—we know you'd want it that way. Try other delicious Life Savers flavors!

table close to the sidewalk and ordered a bottle of beer. He watched the traffic absently and tried to block out some pattern in his mind that would tell him what to do next.

The flow of pedestrians past his table was steady and unhurried, and he was not particularly aware of anyone in particular until he heard a voice and glanced up to find Manuel Zayas standing in front of him, hat in hand.

"May I sit down, Mr. MacKinnon?" he asked.

"Hello, Manuel." MacKinnon kicked a chair around. "Sure. The Corrubedo still in port?"

"The Corrubedo has sailed."

"Got another job now, hunh?"

Manuel Zayas did not answer this. He refused MacKinnon's offer of a beer, and kept turning his sweat-stained felt in his hands.

"What's on your mind?" MacKinnon asked. "If it's about your gun, Lieutenant Rodriguez has it. Do you know Rodriguez?"

"It is not about the gun," Zayas said. His voice was soft and well modulated. "It is about the murder in room 319 of the Palm Hotel, yesterday afternoon."

MACKINNON sat up slowly, more curious than surprised. He was getting used to the fact that many people knew about the murder of Victor Molina, but he had forgotten about Manuel Zayas; he wondered what part he was playing and for whom he was working.

When Zayas continued to watch the street, he said, "Who wants to know about that, Manuel?"

The man turned and gave him a blank look.

"Who're you working for?" MacKinnon asked. "It couldn't be Bruce Aitchison, could it?"

Manuel spread his hands, his eyes still blank. "I do not work for anyone."

"But you know something about it." MacKinnon hesitated and thought of something else. "I'm in the market for a little information, Manuel. That is if you have any."

"The man who was killed carried a package," Manuel said. "I am interested in that."

"And where do I come in?"

"I am not sure. I thought if you had the package, you might be willing to trade it for—shall we say—my silence."

MacKinnon chewed on that a while and realized he was getting nowhere. Manuel knew something. Quite likely he knew that MacKinnon, and possibly Norma Travers, had been in the hotel about the time Molina had been murdered. Then, abruptly, his interest quickened. If Zayas knew this much, *he might also know who else had been in room 319.*

Suddenly MacKinnon realized he had nothing to lose by playing along. "Maybe," he said slowly, "we can make a deal, Manuel. I think we ought to talk things over first." He glanced at his watch and saw that Tom Lanning was due in a couple of minutes. "Where can I get in touch with you later?"

"I," said Zayas, "will get in touch with you."

He was on his feet as he spoke, and before MacKinnon could reply, he was moving quickly along the street. Three seconds later his dark-suited figure had disappeared.

MacKinnon was scowling into his beer when Tom Lanning detached himself from the passing scene and dropped into the chair Zayas had just vacated.

"Beer," he said, when the waiter appeared, and then he lighted a cigarette and looked out across the park.

MacKinnon angled a glance at him. He had met Lanning once in New York, and the glance refreshed his memory. Lanning had a tanned, rectangular face, well lined, though he was not more than forty, and an air of strictly detached competence about him.

He continued to watch the street when the beer came. MacKinnon paid the waiter.

Presently Lanning moved his chair a little closer to MacKinnon's and said, "Under the table, Mac."

MacKinnon felt something touch his knee and put his hand down, his fingers closing upon a cool, compact automatic. He slid his hand up his leg to his trousers pocket and shoved the gun inside.

"Thanks."

"It can't be traced," Lanning said, still not looking at him. He poured beer and drank thirstily. "Not that that will help you much."

Something in the other's manner nettled MacKinnon and he laughed shortly. "You're awfully touchy about it, aren't you?"

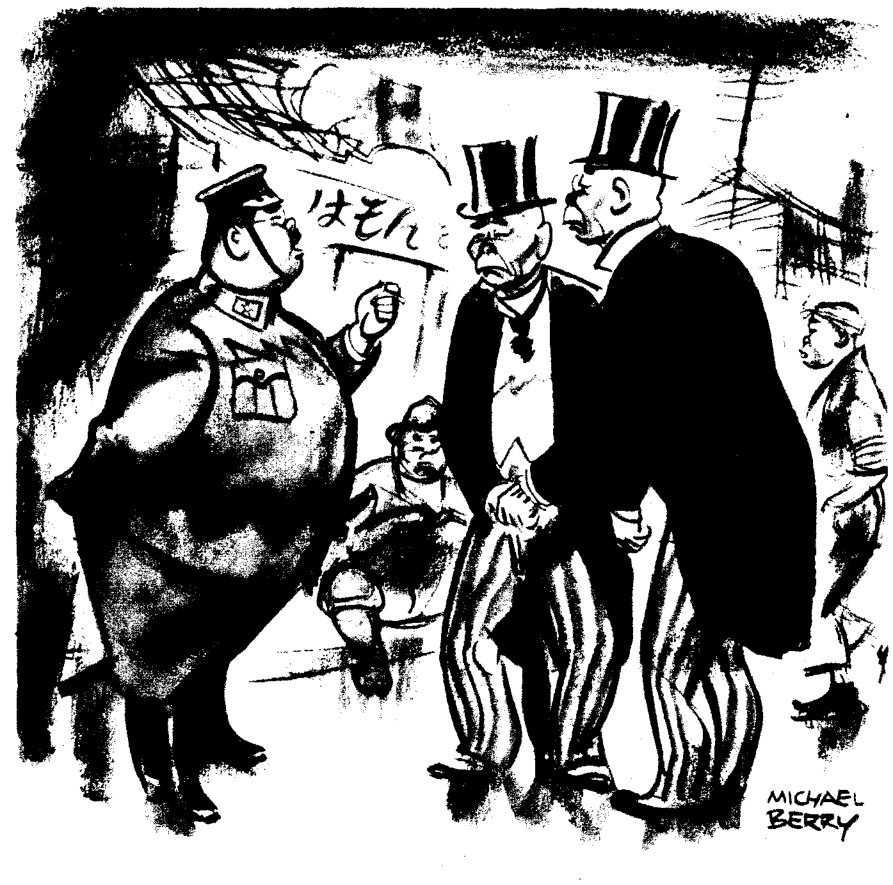
"I don't like the spot you're in."

"You think I'm going to yell for you to get me out?"

"I know you're not," Lanning said. "You

TOKYO TALKING

by MICHAEL BERRY



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YOUNG voices, fresh and natural, making the old songs live again — is there anything sweeter?

When they come to the last few bars of "America The Beautiful" — there'll be many in the audience dabbing at their eyes with handkerchiefs.

Children like these will be singing together, playing together, working together for years. That's why they will fit so well into the teamwork of American life.

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Your own General Motors car is a good example. No single person master-minded it. Many different groups combined to bring it to its high state of efficiency.

Engineers and research men helped design it. Specialists in springing smoothed its ride. Expert designers patterned its steel body — workers lent their skill to producing it — many businesses, large and small, provided such vital items as tires, carburetors, safety glass and the like.

This system of teamwork will shape the future to new and better forms as it now shapes present war products for the purposes of Victory.

No one knows what the homes, cars, or refrigerators of tomorrow will be like. But if we profit by the experience of the past, and hold to the principles that made America great, we may fairly count the years ahead as our country's richest and most productive.

And General Motors, long dedicated to making "more and better things for more people," may be relied on to play its part to the fullest.

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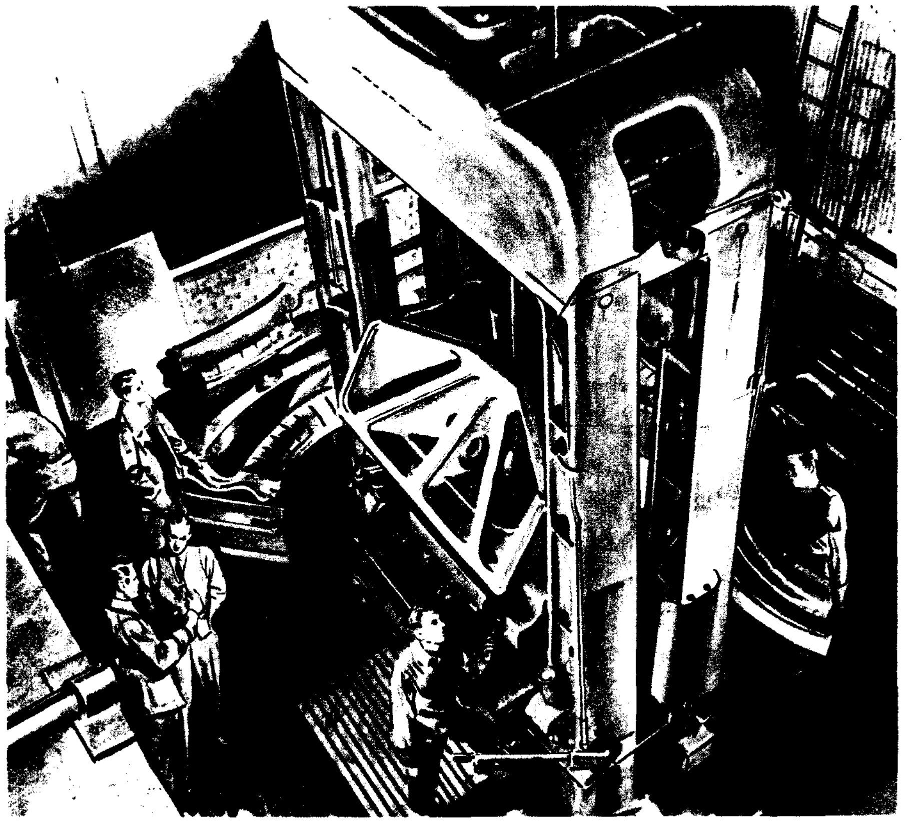
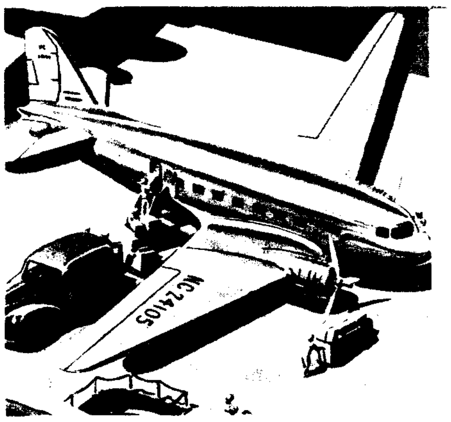
Air Express Saves $2,000 For Texas Plant – Cost $180



2 P.M. TUESDAY – Drop-hammer press breaks down in Texas war plant. Nearest replacement part is in the East, over three normal shipping days away. To avoid costly shutdown, the manager telephones for a new part via Air Express, even though the part weighs 250 pounds.



7 A. M. WEDNESDAY – Replacement part lands at Texas airport. Air Express charges were $180. But manager figures a saving to the plant of three precious production days and a saving of $2,000 in overhead by avoiding a shutdown.

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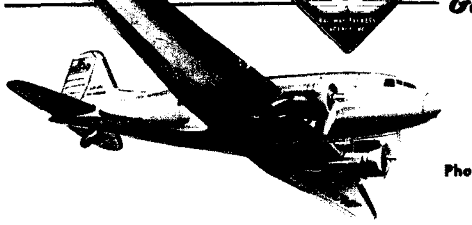

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never have. You won't like the jails down here, either."

"Quit worrying. I'll handle that too." MacKinnon paused, then: "Tell me about Bruce Aitchison," he said, but was sorry he had asked, because what Lanning had to offer added very little to what he already knew.

Lanning finished his beer. "Good luck," he said. "You're on your own, Mac."

"I'll work it out."

"I'll see you on visitor's day," Lanning said, rising and clapping on his hat. "I'll bring you cigarettes. Maybe we can work in a little gin rummy."

"Beat it," MacKinnon said, grinning, "before somebody sees you talking to me and puts in a beef."

LANNING went away, and MacKinnon ordered another beer. He considered the things he might do and found them unappealing. He did not have a single worth-while idea. Not one. Certain things were shaping up but he could think of no way to hurry them. So to hell with it, he thought. Relax, MacKinnon. Enjoy your beer while you can. After that, you can go back to the hotel and talk with Norma, and that will be nice, too.

He found a certain sardonic amusement in such reflections. The beer was good; he began to notice the people who passed his table. He kept telling himself that something would happen if he was patient, and presently something did—in the form of a plump, familiar figure waddling hurriedly along the walk.

"Hey," he called.

Leon Vidal stopped and looked. When he spotted MacKinnon, he beamed and rushed over.

MacKinnon indicated the vacant chair. "Sit down before you tell me," he said.

Vidal opened his eyes. "You knew I had information? But no, you are joking." He sat down and leaned across the table as MacKinnon ordered beer.

"I phoned the hotel but you were not there," he said. "I was going to call you again from my office." He paused to let the waiter serve the beer, then leaned forward a little more as though afraid someone would overhear him. "It is about the blond woman," he said.

MacKinnon's heart gave a little flip and for an instant he forgot to breathe. The noise and movement of the street had gone, and there were only Leon Vidal and himself.

"You know who she is?" he asked quietly.

Vidal closed one eye and nodded. "She is by name Mrs. Gerand, a French marquise who resides here."

"You're sure?"

Leon Vidal nodded again. "I am not allowed to name the one who told me of Mrs. Gerand," he said, "but I do not think he would lie to me."

MacKinnon patted Vidal's arm. "Leon, I'm proud of you," he said. "I knew you were a good reporter."

Vidal lowered his head, looking embarrassed but mightily pleased. "It was nothing," he said.

"Marie Gerand," MacKinnon said thoughtfully.

"You know her?"

"I have met her."

Vidal drank some beer, and now his plump face was sober. "You think this has something to do with what happened in 319?"

"I don't know." MacKinnon was silent for a moment. Then: "What about the man in the car?" he asked. "Was he a big guy?"

"The doorman is not sure. He had the impression that this could be, but since the man was sitting down—"

"Yeah," MacKinnon said, and remembered the snapshot of Clarke he had in his pocket. He leaned back, and now his muscles were loose and rested and he felt good. He told Leon to drink up. "Have you got time to ride back to the Palm with me?" he asked.

"I would like to," Vidal said, wiping his mouth. "You yourself will talk to the doorman. Leredo, his name is. I will arrange it."

MacKinnon was getting used to the lobby of the Palm Hotel. The details were so familiar that he felt like a guest as he leaned against one of the pillars and waited for Leon to bring the doorman. When they joined him and introductions had been made, MacKinnon took the snapshot from his pocket. "Would this be the man who drove the car for the blond woman?"

Leredo accepted the picture and studied it carefully. Finally he looked up and nodded seriously. "It is the same," he said.

"*Gracias,*" MacKinnon said and gave Leredo a dollar.

Leon Vidal inspected MacKinnon gravely when the doorman went away. "I had a glance at the man in the picture," he said. "It is the Mr. Clarke who came on the Corrubedo, I think."

MacKinnon nodded. Clarke drove the car for Mrs. Gerand, he thought, and she knew him in Lisbon, and she is Aitchison's girl friend. . . .

Then he saw Manuel Zayas; it was sheer good luck that he happened to be looking in the right direction.

Zayas was just stepping out of a telephone booth over by the elevators. On impulse, MacKinnon stepped back of the pillar.

"There is a man just coming from the phone booth," he said.

Vidal looked in that direction. "A young man in a dark suit."

"Which way does he come?"

"In the direction of the side entrance."

MacKinnon moved round the pillar, keeping it between him and Zayas. When he thought it safe, he glanced out and saw the fellow just going through the side door. Then, not knowing why but simply obeying the impulse that had made him hide in the first place, he started across the lobby, nodding to Leon Vidal to follow.

Zayas was opposite the alley in back of the hotel when MacKinnon and Vidal reached the street, and as they stopped, Zayas crossed over and entered the bookstore there without bothering to glance around.

"Do you know him?" MacKinnon asked.

Vidal shook his head regretfully. "He is one I do not know," he said.

"We'll wait," MacKinnon said. "Come." He touched Vidal's arm and they went back into the lobby to stand near a window which overlooked the street.

Manuel Zayas came out about five minutes later and started back toward the hotel. When he passed the entrance, MacKinnon went out and started after him, the little reporter trotting at his side.

Apparently Zayas had no idea he was being followed because he showed no hesitation, except at the corners when traffic held him up, and did not once look over his shoulder in the four-block trip that ended when he turned into a doorway flanked by two windows.

MacKinnon stopped fifty yards short of the entrance. "What's that place?"

"An office where telegrams are sent and messages delivered."

MacKinnon found small encouragement in the reply, but he had to try. "It's got windows," he said. "Why don't you go up and take a look?"

The reporter hurried up the street, and MacKinnon drew back against a store front and waited while Leon Vidal moved slowly back and forth along the curbing as though waiting for someone, all the time casting casual glances toward the office.

THIS went on for about three minutes, and MacKinnon was beginning to wonder about it, when Vidal turned abruptly and hurried back. As he reached MacKinnon's side, Zayas came out of the doorway and started across the street, turning left as he reached the walk.

"How many messages did he send?" MacKinnon asked, as he started after Zayas.

"One. He wrote a note of some kind and asked for an envelope. This he addressed and sealed up the note and gave it to the clerk together with some money."

"Fine," MacKinnon muttered under his breath. "We're doing great."

Zayas turned out to be quite a walker and with each passing block, MacKinnon's doubt and discouragement grew. He had not the faintest idea what was to come of this or even what he hoped to accomplish. It was pretty silly, viewed objectively, and this thought occurred to him with increasing frequency.

The trouble was, MacKinnon had a stubborn streak. If Leon Vidal, puffing and wheezing at his side, could continue without complaint, so could he; he'd started the chase by playing a hunch, and nothing had happened yet to convince him that he couldn't finish it.

They were walking along Paseo de Marti now, in front of the gleaming modernity of the Capitol. When they reached the corner, Zayas was still going, and it was several blocks more before they saw him enter a two-story building with a gray-stone façade and a wide, arched doorway.

MacKinnon sighed and began to mop his face. So did Leon Vidal.

"Some hike," MacKinnon said.

"Yes. Now what is next?"

"What's that house?" MacKinnon said. "A private home?"

"I will see," Leon Vidal said, and went away. "It is now used for small apartments," he said when he came back. "There are eight of these, I believe." He waved his hand. "You can see this is not the best district."

MacKinnon saw that there were but two choices left to him: he could follow up or forget the whole thing. "I think this guy knows something about the murder," he said. "His name is Manuel Zayas and he was steward on the Corrubedo, but he jumped ship. I'd like to know what he's up to," he said. "How are you fixed for time?"

Leon cocked his head. "You would like me to follow him?"

"What about your work?"

"I have from now until tomorrow morning."

"You're going to get pretty tired."

"If you think it worth-while, it will not matter."

Faced with Vidal's simple faith, MacKinnon felt guilty. It was, he saw, a job he should do himself and yet he was reluctant to give it the time. Aitchison might make a move later, and MacKinnon wanted to be on hand. That left only Leon Vidal, who would not even accept any payment.

"All right," he said. "I'll be at the hotel. Phone me when you get a chance and keep me posted, and stick with him if you can until you think he's in for the night."

Vidal winked and nodded. MacKinnon gave him a conspirator's wink in return and started up the street.

NORMA TRAVERS and Denny Clarke had the swimming pool to themselves when MacKinnon came down from his room. They were stretched out in canvas chairs, their eyes closed, and baking in the late afternoon sun, so that neither noticed him until he stood before them and coughed.

"Hi," Clarke said, blinking the good blue eye and having some trouble with the other. "Drag up a chair. Where've you been?"

Norma stretched and smiled lazily, but her green eyes said she was glad to see him. He pulled a chair over and sat down beside her.

"Downtown," he said. "I had some things to do. How is Miss Travers this afternoon?"

"Miss Travers is fine, thank you," Norma said.

"For a guy on a vacation," Clarke said, "you spend a lot of time downtown."

"Ain't it the truth! What's with you?"

"Nothing," Clarke said. "I awoke this morning with a hang-over." He grinned at Norma. "I do not feel well, and so I have put in the rest of the day recuperating. What happened to you last night?" he continued to MacKinnon. "You and Adrienne did an awfully fast fade-out at the bar. Did we bore you?"

"Mildly. Drunks usually do."

"Forgive me," Clarke said, showing his teeth as the blond mustache flattened out. "But do I detect a slight edge in your tone?"

"It's possible."

THEIR eyes met. Both smiled and neither of them meant it. MacKinnon found himself bristling a little and realized that he disliked this man a little more each time he saw him. "It could be," he said. "It's probably the heat. Where's Adrienne?"

Norma noticed the moment of friction between the two men, and with this digression, she spoke quickly: "She went to the races."

"She got herself a Cuban date," Clarke said. "Met him right here at the pool this morning. He's going to show her how to beat the races. Say, how'd you two get along last night anyway?"

"Got along fine," MacKinnon said.

"You like her, hunh?" The blue eyes were still amused in a speculative sort of way.

"Don't you?"

"I like Norma better," Clarke said and patted her arm.

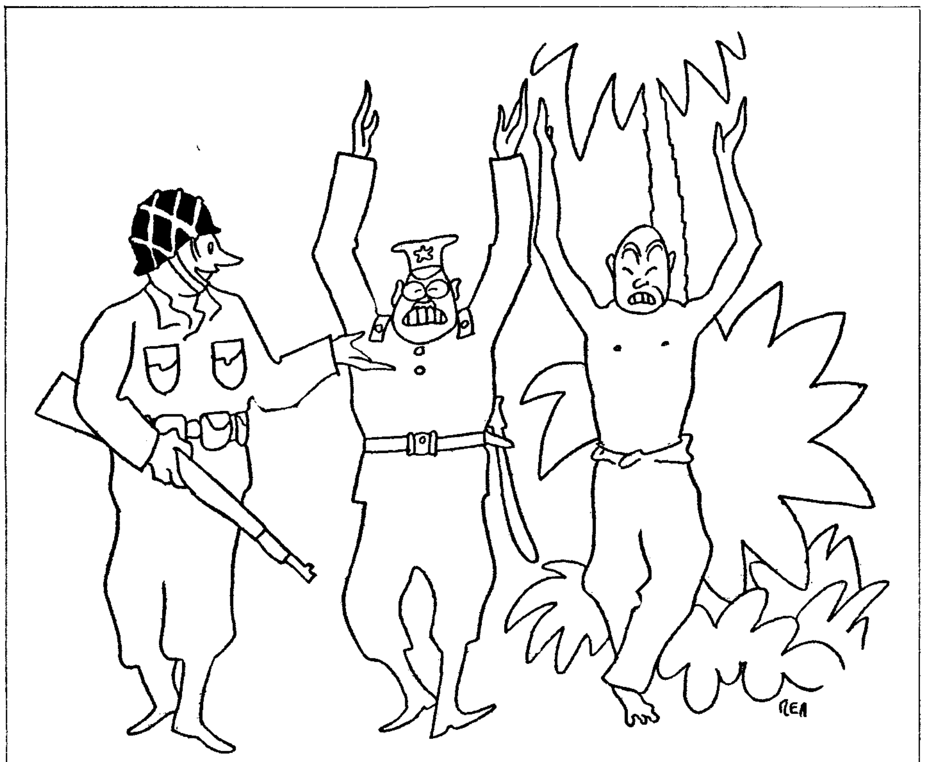
Norma sat up and stretched again. She said she thought it was time for a swim and stood up, cap in hand. MacKinnon expected Clarke to follow, but the big man made no move, and Norma wanted to know if she had to go alone.

Clarke said something about being too lazy, and MacKinnon said he had to cool off first. He watched her walk to the pool's edge, liking the rounded firmness of her and admiring the smooth perfection of the suit she wore. As she poised there, curling her toes on the pool's edge, she smiled over her shoulder and dived neatly. When she started for the other end, MacKinnon glanced at Clarke and marshaled his thoughts:

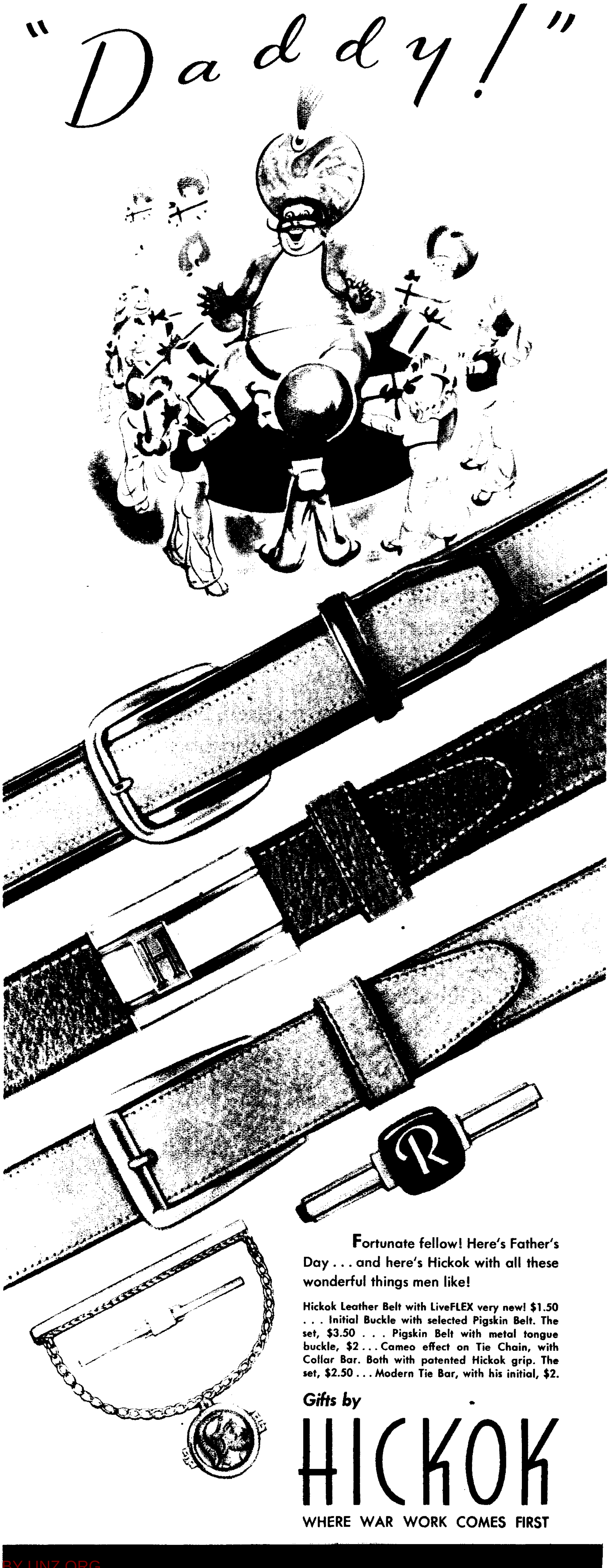
"How're you making out with your job?"

"What job?" Clarke said, not looking round.

"I thought," MacKinnon said evenly, "you



COLLIER'S "By the way, do you two souvenirs know each other?" GARDNER REA



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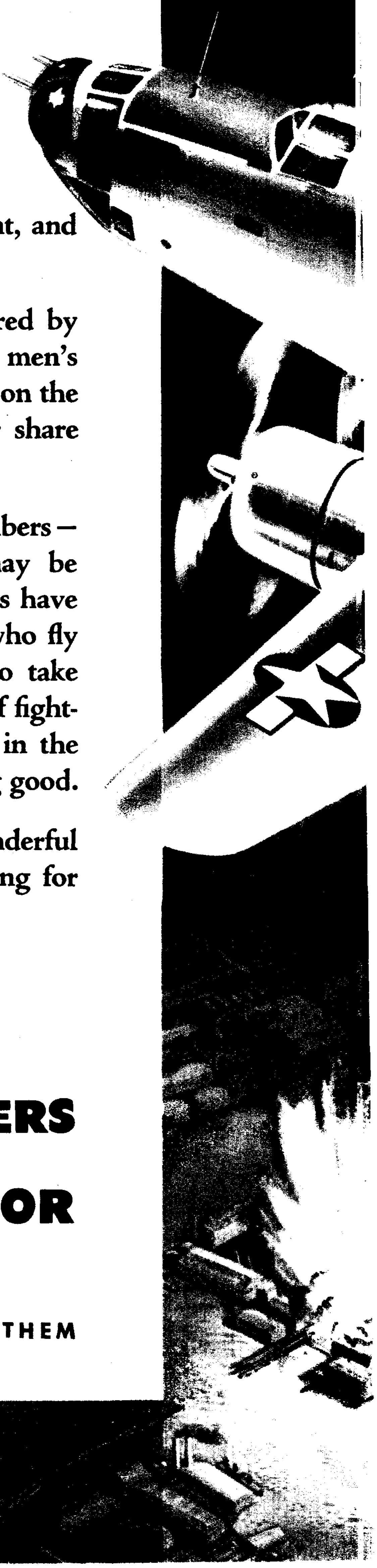

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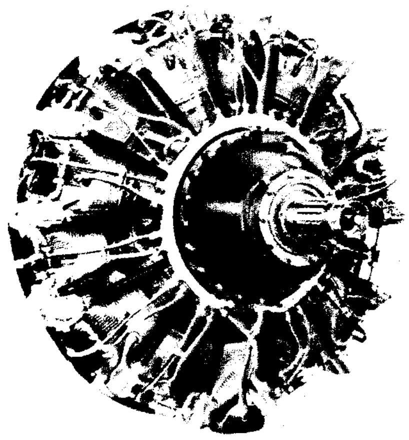

BUICK POWERS THE LIBERATOR

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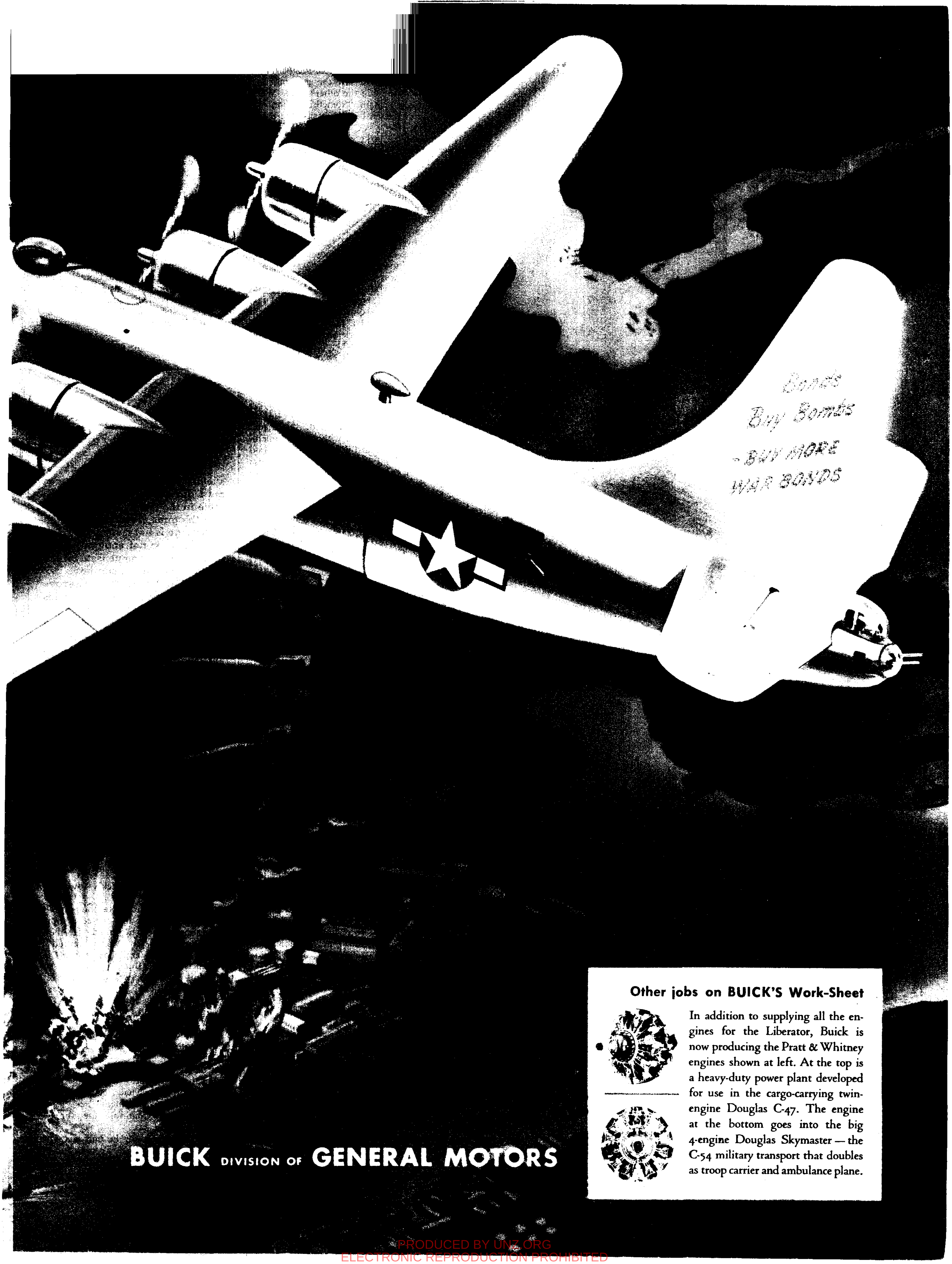
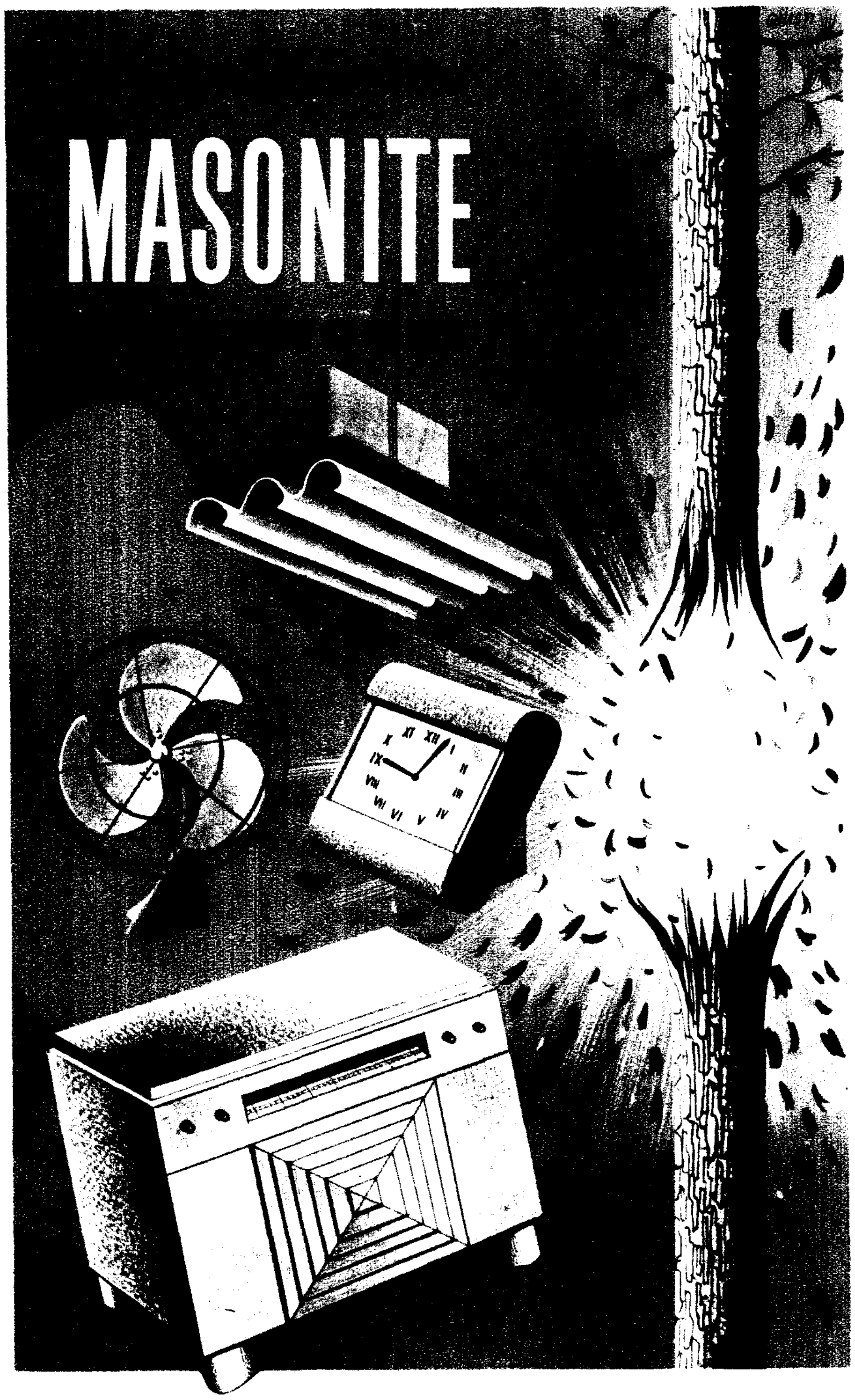


Other jobs on BUICK'S Work-Sheet

In addition to supplying all the engines for the Liberator, Buick is now producing the Pratt & Whitney engines shown at left. At the top is a heavy-duty power plant developed for use in the cargo-carrying twin-engine Douglas C-47. The engine at the bottom goes into the big 4-engine Douglas Skymaster — the C-54 military transport that doubles as troop carrier and ambulance plane.

BUICK DIVISION OF GENERAL MOTORS



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came here to straighten out some things."

"Did I?"

MacKinnon gave the insinuation plenty of time to simmer. He saw the growing hostility and wariness in the other's face. When he was ready, he said, "Something about fixing up your citizenship. You said there was a new law—"

"Oh, that." Clarke glanced away, and his voice sounded relieved. "Oh, yes. . . . Sure. . . . I guess I'm doing all right. There's always some red tape. You know how it is."

MacKinnon leaned back and watched the big man through lowered lids. "We were talking about you last night," he said. "Adrienne told me you were a handy guy to know in Lisbon."

"I got by," Clarke said. "A dollar here, a dollar there. In Lisbon, people would pay almost anything for what they wanted, particularly refugees. I had transportation home, but I found I could sell it for three times what I paid for it, and after that, well, I just stayed on. I met some people and got in with a guy. We did a little business for a while in wine and cork and sardines, and after that, there were other things."

"I guess the war didn't bother you much," MacKinnon hinted.

Clarke turned his head again, and MacKinnon realized he was on the blind left side, and that only by a complete turn could the man watch him.

"What is that?" Clarke said. "Sarcasm? No, it didn't," he added, without resentment. "I'd had my war, and I did just as much good where I was as I would have in a defense factory. Of course, I got paid for it, but so does a defense worker."

"You didn't know Norma before you sailed?" MacKinnon said.

"Never saw her before."

"Oh," MacKinnon said, as though the thought had just occurred to him. "I saw that steward today—Manuel Zayas. I guess he didn't sail with the Corrubedo."

"He was a sneaky little chiseler."

"How do you mean?"

CLARKE hoisted himself to a sitting position and began to fiddle with his mustache. "Always prowling. The girls' room was searched a couple of times and so was mine. . . ."

"Why would he do that?" MacKinnon said innocently.

"How do I know? Light-fingered, probably. Looking for something he could lift without it being noticed." Clarke scowled. "Where'd you see him?"

"Downtown. He was hanging around the Palm Hotel."

"Palm Hotel? Where's that?"

MacKinnon told him, and Clarke said, "What were you doing in a place like that? More business?"

"That's right," MacKinnon said. "Checking up on a couple of things. Sure you never heard of it?"

Denny Clarke sat quite still for a moment; then he stood up. When he moved slowly toward the pool, MacKinnon went with him. Presently Clarke stopped. Very deliberately he looked MacKinnon up and down, his gaze unpleasant, his manner studied and insulting.

"You know," he said, "I could take a very fast dislike to a guy like you. You're getting awfully nosy, aren't you?"

"It happens all the time," MacKinnon said. "It happens when people start putting on an act and forget to tell the truth."

"Meaning me?"

MacKinnon returned the other's stare. "I mean you know where the Palm Hotel is," he said. "You drove Mrs. Gerand there yesterday and waited while she went in and rented a room."

Something flickered in Clarke's eyes, leaving them cold and ugly. "You just don't give a damn, do you, Mac?" he said, and dived into the pool.

MacKinnon let his breath come out and felt his muscles relax. He was not sure why he had made an issue with Clarke, nor why he had decided to crowd him. Now that it was done, he realized that it might even be a good idea, that with something to worry about, Clarke might make a mistake. He dived after the big man and started down the pool.

Later, when they were drying off, Clarke ignored the incident. Except for the fact that he would not look at MacKinnon directly, even when he held a match for his cigarette, there was nothing in his manner to indicate that anything at all had happened.

"I've got to go up," he said finally. "I'm working on a date." He looked at Norma. "Coming?"

Norma hesitated and took a quick glance at MacKinnon and said she thought she'd stay a little longer. Clarke said he'd see them later and started off.

Norma sat down, motioning MacKinnon beside her.

"You weren't very nice to Denny, were you?" she said.

"I don't like him. And I trust him less."

"Oh. Do you think he—"

"Did you ever get the idea that it might have been something more than coincidence that brought him aboard the Corrubedo?"

She rubbed one arm absently and stared out across the pool, her green eyes thoughtful. "Yes," she said. "I've thought a lot about it. What do you think, Paul?" she added presently.

"I don't think it was coincidence."

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She considered this. "Have you found out anything more? Did anything happen today?"

"I found out Denny was at the Palm Hotel yesterday."

"Paul!" She leaned quickly toward him, her voice hushed. "When?"

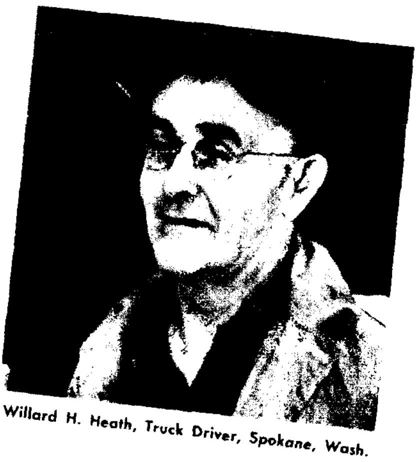
"Around lunchtime." He thought about his idea that someone had rented a room to observe the one he had rented. He thought about telling her that Marie Gerand had rented such a room and that Denny Clarke had been with her. But it was a long story, and he still did not know enough to give her much encouragement. Neither was there any point in mentioning Manuel Zayas. Things had happened but so far there had been no worth-while break.

"What about Adrienne?" he said. "Did you talk with her? She knew Denny in Lisbon."

Norma made a small resigned sound and brushed the idea aside. "Denny knew everyone in Lisbon from what I can gather, especially the attractive women. Yes, I talked with her. A lot. She told me about her marriage, and—"

It was the same thing he had heard from Adrienne, but he listened, keeping his brain alert for any discrepancy and knowing finally that he had reached a pretty hopeless state of mind. He was simply grasping blindly with-

Anita Clagett, Supt. of Nurses, Jackson, Miss.



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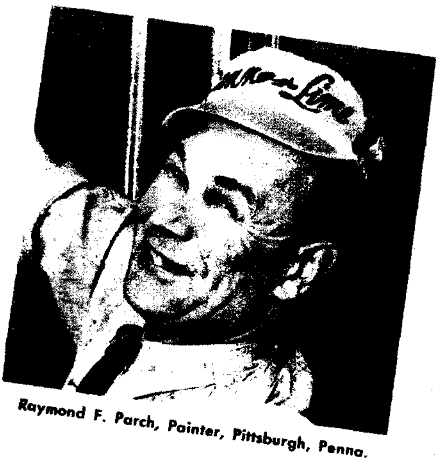

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out thought of reason or logic or even so tenuous a thing as a hunch.

"You don't really think she has anything to do with it, do you?" Norma asked when she had finished.

"No, I don't," MacKinnon said, and then he came to the question that he had wanted to ask for a long time. "Do you remember pretty well what was in that manuscript? Was there any mention of Bruce Aitchison?"

She looked at him curiously, and he hurried on: "The reason I asked is that he's hooked up with United Chemical, and I'd heard that they've been under investigation for some time. The newspaper stories are sort of vague but I understood it was something about having a setup that Washington was trying to trace to Vichy France and Germany."

She nodded, her glance still thoughtful. "Yes," she said. "His name was in it. So were United Chemical and two or three other American names."

MacKinnon put down his inner exultancy and hoped nothing showed in his face. He thought: That's all, brother! Dave Adams had it right on the nose, and that manuscript will blow United wide open if we ever get it.

Aloud he told her he thought Bruce Aitchison knew as much about the manuscript's disappearance as anyone. He told her what had happened last night when he was driving Adrienne home from Sans Souci. He was just finishing when he glanced up and saw a slim, dark, immaculate-looking man move out from the shadows beneath the veranda and start toward them. "Oh-oh," he said. "Rodriguez."

"Yes," Norma said.

"Remember what I told you this morning."

"Oh, I did. He was here not long after you left. We've already had a talk."

LIEUTENANT RODRIGUEZ swept off his Panama and bowed to Norma. There was also a thin smile for MacKinnon. "Good afternoon," he said politely. "They told me at the desk I would probably find you here."

"Us?" said MacKinnon. "Or me?"

Rodriguez hesitated, looking from MacKinnon to Norma and back again.

"You," he said at last to MacKinnon. "I did not inquire about Miss Travers. If you will accept my apologies for the intrusion, I will be glad to wait for you upstairs."

Norma let MacKinnon answer that one, and he did very badly with it. He had made plenty of mistakes in his day, but later, when he had a chance to think about it, he realized that this one topped them all. It was not because he was cocky or overconfident. He was in a spot; he knew it, but he figured Norma was in the same spot and it would do no harm to let her hear what the man had to say.

What he forgot to consider was the fact that he was not an innocent bystander. He had come here for a purpose and he had acted accordingly and he was in no position to explain to Norma certain things he had done. The fact that Rodriguez was an extremely clever operator did not help matters at all.

"No," he said. "It's okay. Sit down."

The lieutenant shrugged. "Very well," he said, and sat down, bowing again to Norma and adding that he hoped she would pardon him.

Norma smiled and leaned back in her chair. She said it was quite all right. She said not to mind her; if MacKinnon did not object, neither did she.

"I dispatched a cable to New York the other day," Rodriguez began. "As I told you, I have friends there and I asked that some inquiries be made." He tapped his pocket. "The answer is here."

MacKinnon found something vaguely disturbing in the way Rodriguez looked at him.

"You were in Italy as a correspondent," Rodriguez said. "For one of the press associations."

"That's right. Sicily, Salerno, Cassino, Rome."

"Why did you leave?"

"Because I got fed up writing about war," MacKinnon said. "Fighting is one thing. Watching and trying to write about it is something else."

"You went back to the States and did a little writing," Rodriguez said. "You felt this would help your country's war effort?"

"Not particularly."

"You had no desire to take an active part in the war? You made no effort to participate as a fighting man?"

"What does your cable say?"

"It says you are 4F. Something about your back."

"A couple of vertebrae out of line," MacKinnon said, and got ready to take the rest of it.

He had an idea what was coming and he saw it was no good defending himself for Norma's benefit unless he could tell the whole story.

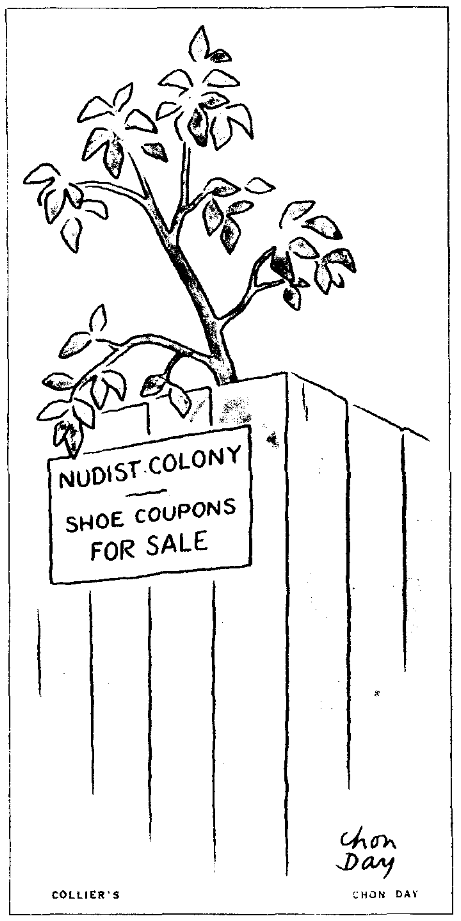
He glanced at Norma, and her gaze was serious. He put on a small tight grin and looked back at Rodriguez, feeling the stubbornness come, aware that he was being needled and resenting it.

"It does not bother you?" Rodriguez said.

"It bothered the doctor at the draft board."

"Yes—though if you were so inclined, I understand the Merchant Marine is not so fussy."

"I get seasick," MacKinnon said.



"And you had no skill for the defense plant?"

"I'm allergic to factories. Sort of a claustrophobia." And then his resentment boiled a little high, and he said, "Look, I don't want to be unpleasant, but if you're trying to prove I haven't carried a gun or sailed a ship or made a bullet in this war, you're right. If that's all you've got on your mind—"

"It's not. Quite." Rodriguez's face was just the same. So was his voice. "I'm trying to arrive at the reason for your visit to Havana."

MacKinnon stole another glance at Norma and he did not like what he saw. Her face was somber and her eyes when they studied him were wide and troubled, as though they were seeing him for the first time in his true light. He tightened against his fears and looked at Rodriguez.

"You don't like the vacation story?"

"I have been wondering," Rodriguez said. "You are an old friend of Miss Travers, are you not? And neither of you has been here before, and yet this time you are here together. You did not know she would be in Havana?"

"No."

"Ah," said Rodriguez, and then he pounced. "If that is so, why were you waiting for her at the customhouse the morning she arrived?"

Out of the corner of his eye, MacKinnon saw Norma sit up. "But he wasn't," she said. "I mean he couldn't have, because—I mean—" She floundered and stopped, and Rodriguez did not bother to look at her.

It was a fine break for MacKinnon, that outburst. It gave him time to collect his thoughts, to regain his emotional balance and bring forth an answer.

"You were there," Rodriguez said.

"Sure," MacKinnon said. "So were you. I went down with Leon Vidal. He's a reporter on—"

"I know him." The lieutenant's voice was cold.

"He was covering the arrivals. You know, ship news."

"You saw her come out—with Mrs. Brissard and Mr. Clarke. You followed the taxi to the hotel."

"That's right," MacKinnon said. "I was right behind you."

Rodriguez gave up the attempt. His shoulders seemed to relax, and he nodded slightly as though this was not important, and glanced down across the hotel grounds.

MacKinnon waited, aware that Norma was still watching him but not daring to look at her. Down on the highway there came, faintly, the sound of traffic, and a car labored up the hill past the tennis courts, the throb of its motor fading as the crest was reached.

Rodriguez turned and the canvas chair creaked under him. "You had lunch with Mr. Aitchison today," he said. "You discussed a manuscript or a story—something like that."

MACKINNON swallowed and battled his mounting incredulity. No guy could be as good as Rodriguez seemed to be. It wasn't possible. He might have been followed to the Paris, but this other— Rodriguez was guessing; it had to be that way. And then MacKinnon remembered the hovering waiter who had aroused Aitchison's displeasure as he stood by the serving table. . . .

He saw there was nothing he could do. He sat and braced himself, and while his heart withered and the bottom dropped slowly out of his stomach.

"There was some trouble over terms," Rodriguez said. "You were offered twenty-five thousand dollars, Mr. MacKinnon, but you did not think this was enough."

He paused, and MacKinnon felt his face stiffen and grow cold. "You're mistaken," he managed to say.

"You said for fifty thousand you might be willing to do business." Rodriguez rose. "And I do not think I am mistaken. These days one must be careful. That is why so many of my countrymen are happy to be of service. The waiter at the Paris does not make any mistakes."

It sort of boxed MacKinnon in, and he did the only thing he could. He said, "It looks like it's the waiter's word against mine—unless you want to talk to Aitchison."

"I see," Rodriguez said. "You do not care to tell me about this manuscript." He waited, continued softly: "The man who was killed in room 319 went there with a package of some kind. It has never been found." He stood silent a moment, his hands on the back of the chair, then straightened. "I thought you would like to know how my investigation is coming. I thought you might like to tell me the whole truth, but it is for you to decide."

He bowed to Norma Travers and put on his hat. He nodded to MacKinnon and brought out an expression from his vocabulary of slang. "I think you have two strikes on you, Mr. MacKinnon," he said. "And your time is running out."

MacKinnon watched him go, the growing awareness of what had happened scaring him badly. It was awfully quiet now, and he knew it was time to look at Norma. He had an idea he might have to talk a little fast until he had convinced her that Rodriguez was only punching in the dark. He decided to lead up to it gradually, establishing a casual approach.

"A very clever guy," he said. "A little nuts, of course, but smart. I guess it's lucky he hasn't tossed me in jail."

He brought himself to look at her; then his eyes widened, and his heart grew cold,

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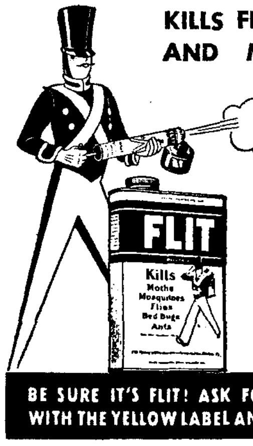

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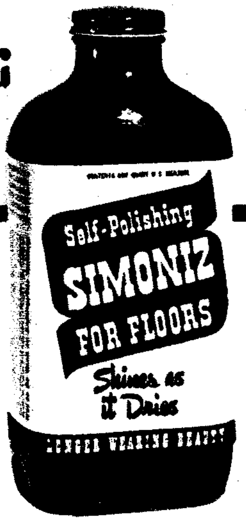

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A PRODUCT OF THE SIMONIZ COMPANY—RECOGNIZED FOR OVER 30 YEARS AS AUTHORITIES ON FINISH MAINTENANCE AND PRESERVATION and he felt all shocked and sick inside. For this was a girl he had never seen before. This girl's face was stiff and tortured, and there was nothing but loathing in the eyes.

"Hey," he said, the shock still with him. "Wait a minute. You've got it all wrong."

"Oh, no, Paul," she said, her icy contempt worse than anger. "I think I have it right—finally. It was very effective, the thing you did this morning. You were really very sweet. I believed you—I was enormously happy—when you asked if we could start over again. From scratch, wasn't it?"

"But look—"

"I thought it was luck, finding you here." Norma cut him short. "I'd come all this way with only Victor to help, and I thought it would be easier with you along. I needed help, and I thought your being here was just coincidence. You weren't always easy to live with, but you'd always been honest, with yourself and others, and . . ."

MacKinnon tried to shut out the sound of those words, and though he missed some of them, the scorn came through, controlled and punishing. He remembered other times when they were kids. In those days she shrieked at him and waved her arms and cried, and it was a thing he understood and could cope with, but this . . .

"You knew I was coming here," she said, cutting in on his thoughts again. "How, I don't know, but it's obvious that you did."

"I guess I killed Molina, too," he said.

That stopped her a moment, but she went on in the same frigid tone. "I don't know," she said. "I don't know that I particularly care, Paul. It's obvious, though, isn't it, that you could not sell the manuscript for fifty thousand dollars unless you had it?"

"That was a gag," MacKinnon said, his voice rising. "I wanted to con him along—"

She cut in flatly: "I could hardly expect you to admit you knew anything about it, could I? What is important is this: You lied to me from the first. You pretended to be something you are not."

"How?"

"I don't know how—or why. But you came here to meet me, pretending it was accidental. You were waiting when I stepped ashore." Her chin was still up, but her lip trembled once before she caught it, and she stood up. "I guess that's all I need to know."

She turned back, and her fists were clenched. Then she caught her breath, and a sob came out. She said, "Oh—how could you be so despicable?"

Then she caught up her robe and started to run.

MacKinnon wanted to run after her. He wanted to get hold of her and shake her, shouting the truth at her until she apologized. He did take one step before he saw that he had no defense, or anything more to say.

He stood there in the lengthening shadows, staring sightlessly ahead of him until his legs stopped trembling and the stiffness went out of his back. There was in him now no further capacity for thought, and he dived into the pool and swam two lengths, toweling briskly when he finished.

The exercise helped. The quietness was in his mind again, and reaction brought a welcome weariness, a sort of resignation that enabled him to see clearly again, so that things took on their proper value. He was the victim of bad luck and a combination of circumstances neatly analyzed by Lieutenant Rodriguez. In any case he did not blame Norma. Faced with the same evidence, circumstantial as it was, he would have rendered the same verdict, so that there was nothing now but to keep his eye on the ball and keep swinging.

More than ever, the manuscript was the pay-off. It meant his job, it meant Norma, it meant everything he'd ever wanted. Find that before he was thrown in jail, he told himself, and she would understand. With such understanding, even jail might not be so bad.

"The trouble is," he muttered, "you haven't got the damn' manuscript. You're no closer to getting it than you ever were."

He picked up his robe and scuffed into his slippers, starting slowly along the side of the pool toward the arched recesses which led to the lower halls and service rooms, his thoughts straightening a little now and focusing more and more on Bruce Aitchison.

PAUL MACKINNON crossed his fingers mentally as he knocked at Adrienne Brissard's door and when she opened it to greet him with a smile, he was deeply grateful that he had found her in.

He had nothing to say, nothing to do, nothing on his mind except possibly a drink and a couple of kind words. His trouble was simply that he could no longer stand his own company, and now that he had showered and shaved, he'd had enough of himself.

"I'm bored with myself," he said. "Would you have time for one drink? Or were you getting dressed?" he added, seeing the light flannel robe she wore.

"But there is time," Adrienne said. "Come in." She had her dark hair pinned up, and there were feathered mules on her feet. With her tightly belted robe, she looked smaller and more rounded than ever. "I just had a bath. Does my nose shine?"

"Like velvet," MacKinnon said. "How were the races?"

Her face lighted up instantly, and her eyes sparkled. The radio was beating out a fox trot and she danced a step or two to its rhythm. "Wonderful," she cried. "I had four winners. I picked one for Denny, too. It paid eight-sixty. You should have come."

"A fine time to tell me," MacKinnon said. "I hear you got yourself a Cuban."

"Ramon something," she said. "He is cute. . . . Here," she said, seeing MacKinnon's restless gaze and knowing what he wanted. She opened a drawer and brought out the bottle of Scotch he had ordered the night before. "Will water do?"

"It will for me."

"For me, too."

MacKinnon took the Scotch and went into the bathroom and fixed the two drinks. "It's a little warm," he said, when they tasted them, "but it's still good."

She accepted a cigarette and perched on the arm of the divan. She asked him what he had been doing all day, and he told her what he could.

Then, as he finished, a horrible thought occurred to him.

"Look," he said, "have you got a date for dinner?"

Adrienne nodded, her mouth pursing and her eyes mischievous.

"Phooey!"

"Phooey? What is that?"

"Phooey," said MacKinnon glumly, "is an expression of acute disgust. It is used to denote dissatisfaction and can be substituted for such expressions as 'That's a hell of a note! . . . A thing like that could only happen to me!' Though with the proper connotation it can also mean—"

Adrienne laughed with loudness and spontaneity. "I think I understand," she said. "You have a good sense of humor, Paul. I like it when you are like this."

"I don't," MacKinnon said. "You couldn't cut it short, could you? I mean, if it's just a dinner date, maybe you could get away early."

She shook her head.

"He might bore you, this Ramon. Just because he can pick winners at the track doesn't mean he is amusing after dinner. You could tell him you'd already made this later date—say for around ten-thirty."

Again she shook her head.

MacKinnon persisted, but in the end, Adrienne still would make no promises.

"If he is very wonderful," she said, "and I am having too marvelous a time—"

"Sure," MacKinnon said. "But you won't. You'll get a little bored and think about MacKinnon, and by eleven o'clock, you'll be back here."

"We will see," Adrienne said, as he finished his drink. "But no promises, and you must not be angry if I do not come."

He winked at her. He said okay. He said thanks for letting him in and thanks also for the drink. "I'll be hanging around the lobby about eleven," he said.

It was then six-thirty, and he went downstairs to ask the desk if there had been any telephone calls. There was a message in his box which said that Leon Vidal had called and would call again, so MacKinnon told the clerk where he'd be and selected a chair that enabled him to observe both doors and the elevators.

ADRIENNE came down at seven, dressed in black this time, not formal but smart, and with a fur piece over one arm. MacKinnon went to meet her and said nice things, and while they were standing there, Norma Travers came in the main entrance.

Adrienne saw her first. "Hello, darling," she said. "You have been downtown?" she asked, pointing to the small packages Norma carried in her arms.

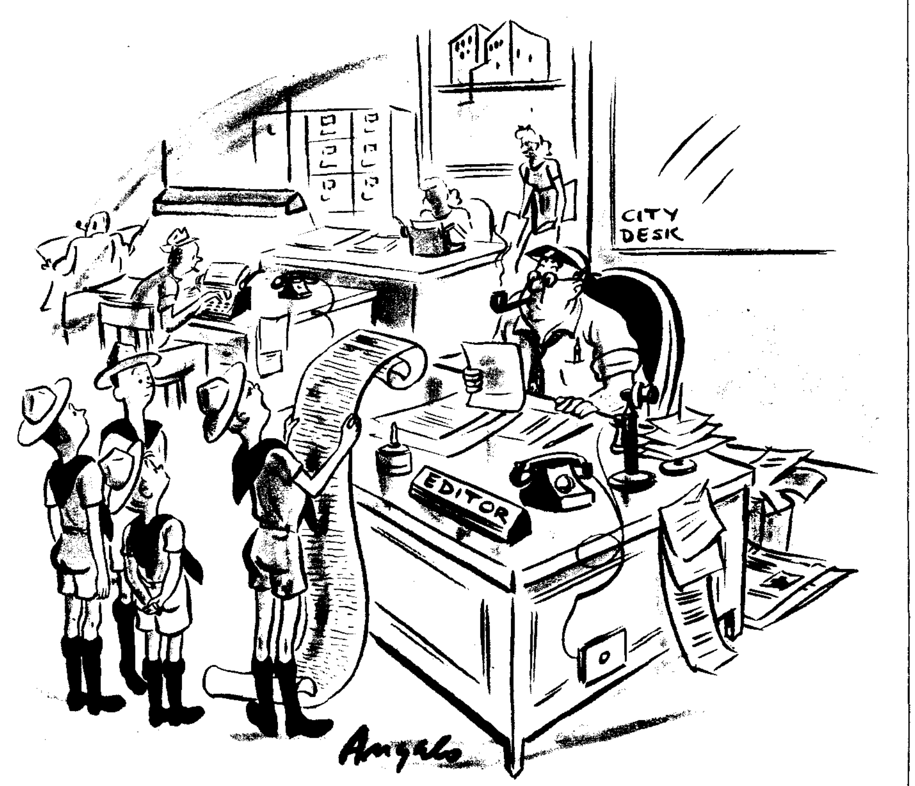
"A flying trip," Norma said. "There were a few things I needed."

"Then you are just in time to help Paul."

MacKinnon watched her, but Norma would not look at him. In profile, her face was serious and dignified as she waited politely for Adrienne to finish.

"You must take pity on him," Adrienne said. "He is desolate with loneliness, and now you are here to have dinner with him."

"I'm sorry." Norma smiled and gave MacKinnon a glance that was nothing more than a gesture. "I'm having something sent



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BROWN-FORMAN DISTILLERY COMPANY, INC., AT LOUISVILLE IN KENTUCKY up. I've had a rather nasty headache all day and I'm going to baby myself."

"I have some pills," Adrienne said.

"It's all right. I'll just have something to eat in my room and take a couple of sleeping tablets." Norma started to edge away. "A good night's sleep always fixes me up."

She nodded to MacKinnon, still not seeing him, and turned toward the elevators.

Adrienne frowned. "I will go with her," she said to MacKinnon. "There may be something I can do. If Ramon comes—oh, but you do not know him, do you? I will be right back. Wait, Norma," she called, and hurried after her.

DENNY CLARKE came down before Adrienne got back. He wore white flannels, a blue flannel blazer, and a mantle of casual assurance which suggested he had not a care in the world.

"Hello, snoop," he said. "Still touchy?"

"No. What about you?"

"No." Clarke's blue eyes were veiled, half smiling. "I'd even buy you a drink—if I had time."

"Date?" MacKinnon watched the big man nod as he looked about. "Mrs. Gerand?"

Clarke sighed but seemed otherwise unresentful. "There you go," he said. "Always nosing around. I don't know why I like you. Come to think of it, I'm not sure that I do. . . . Oh, hello. Here's Adrienne. Hi, honey."

Adrienne looked around for Ramon. "She'll be all right," she said to MacKinnon. "I think it's too much sun."

"Who?" Clarke said. "Norma? Is something the matter?"

"She has a headache." Adrienne was still looking for Ramon. "She is taking some sleeping tablets after she eats. She will be all right."

"I'm sorry," Clarke said. "I wish I had time. I'd go up and hold her hand."

"She'd like that," MacKinnon said.

"You know she would, pal. You look awfully sharp, honey," he said to Adrienne. "I'm sorry I have to shove off."

He went away, and presently Adrienne said, "There's Ramon." She started away, then stopped and cocked her head, her glance mischievous. "Did you really mean it about waiting for me, Paul?" she asked.

"Come back around eleven and see," MacKinnon said, and watched her walk toward the tall, portly man with pointed mustaches in a smoothly tailored tropical suit.

MacKinnon walked back to his chair and for a while watched the people in the lobby. But presently he began considering himself and discovered he felt lousy. Giving away somewhat to the persistent urge of self-pity, he found that in his official capacity, he was a complete and total bust. Being further away from his objective than he had been when he started, he was at the moment without one constructive idea and had been reduced to the unsatisfactory status of watchful waiting when what he most needed was a little action. As for his personal affairs, which he had no right to consider but did, he was a most unhappy guy.

He could fix that part all right. He could go upstairs and knock on Norma's door, pushing in when she opened it and standing resolutely against it, so she could not escape while he told her what was what. That he could do. He could make her understand everything, and her headache would be all cured and she would be ashamed of her accusations and come into his arms while he wiped away her tears. It was a wonderful thought and there was just one trouble with the vision: He could talk to no one, not even Norma, until he had the manuscript safely in State Department hands.

That's all, brother, he thought bitterly. Quit moping and get the manuscript. . . . He realized he was being addressed and glanced up to find a bellboy in front of him.

"Telephone, Mr. MacKinnon."

"Oh, thanks," he said and got up quickly, walking with new hope across the lobby to the telephone.

"This is Leon Vidal," the voice said. "I tried to get you earlier, but they said—"

"I know," MacKinnon cut in. "I'm sorry."

"It is of no importance, but your man is now in the Club International having a drink at the bar. This is the second bar he has been to since he left the house, but I have not yet seen him talking to anyone in particular."

A wave of frustration closed in on MacKinnon as he thought it over, leaving him in a state of mind which presented no bright spots and little hope. He could find no excuse but wishful thinking for having Manuel Zayas followed; the possibility that anything good would come of it was so remote. . . .

He took a breath and shut his mind against the idea. Remote or not, there was a possibility and it was about all he had left. "All right," he said. "He doesn't know you're following him? Then stick with it a while longer, will you? Has he eaten yet?"

Vidal said Zayas had not yet eaten, and MacKinnon told him to grab something when Zayas ate, if he could. He said it was probably just a damn' fool idea, but if Vidal would do this for him, he would be very grateful.

His gray eyes were morose as he hung up, and he stood staring fixedly across the lobby for a moment. Presently he shook himself, and the tightness went out of his mouth when he realized that Briggs, the manager, was watching him.

Briggs smiled and came over. "You look worried," he said.

"I was thinking about what I could do tonight. Are there any fights in town?"

"Fights?" Briggs was a Canadian and more brisk and businesslike than most hotel managers. "Oh, you mean boxing matches? Yes, indeed. Every Saturday night. I never miss them."

"Saturday, huh?" MacKinnon said, this being Thursday.

"Do you like *jai alai?*"

MacKinnon was only kidding himself and he knew it. He wasn't going anywhere, fights or no fights. He was going to stay right here and wait for Leon Vidal's calls; he was going to wait and see if Bruce Aitchison had anything to offer. That noon he had told MacKinnon he would give him until tonight and it was now tonight.

"*Jai alai* is okay," he said. "But it's not much fun going alone."

"That's true," Briggs said.

"You wouldn't want a drink, would you?" MacKinnon asked hopefully.

"Ah!" Briggs hesitated and seemed tempted, but his consciousness of his duties and position won out. "Thanks just the same. Perhaps later."

MACKINNON went into the bar and had two Martinis, some peanuts and a desultory conversation with one of the bartenders. Before going into the dining room, he went back to the desk to see if there were any messages, and finding none, he went in and ate alone.

That took him an hour or more, and he wasted another thirty minutes over a brandy, but it was still only nine-twenty when he came back to the lobby. People in evening clothes were streaming through from the main entrance, and he could hear, faintly, the sound of dance music, not from the small dining-room band but from the opposite direction.

He killed another half hour exploring the source of this and found that it was a private dance in one of the ballrooms. A couple of men in uniform stopped him when he tried to get past the ticket seller, and no one seemed to understand English, so he came back to the desk, and there was still no call from Leon Vidal, no word from Aitchison.

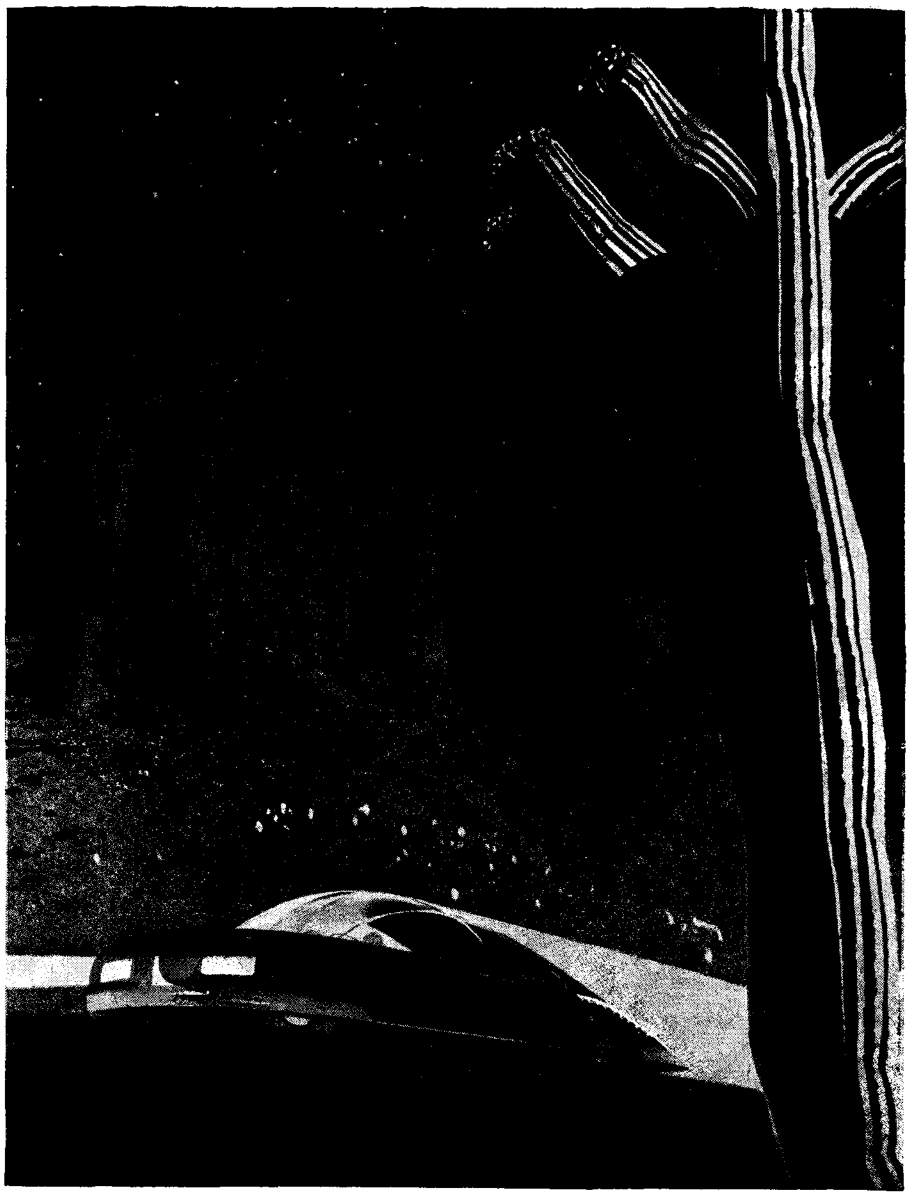
When Adrienne and her boy friend came in at ten minutes of eleven, MacKinnon had to fight back the desire to rush up and kiss her. He could see her smile quickly when she spotted him across the lobby, but he had sense enough to stay where he was while Ramon put on his good-night act. He did not look exactly happy and seemed to argue a little, but if this was so, it did no good, for in the end, she put out her hand, and Ramon held it a moment and went sadly away.

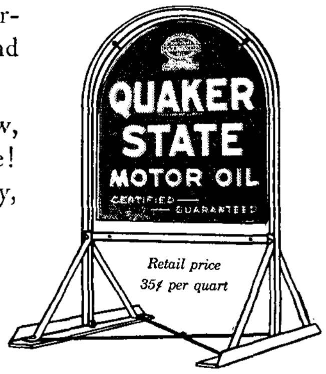
"You were right," she said to MacKinnon, when he came to meet her. "Ramon is nicer at the races than in the back seat of a car."

"I can hardly blame him for that," MacKinnon said.

"Also, he bores me a little."

"I'm deeply grateful," MacKinnon told





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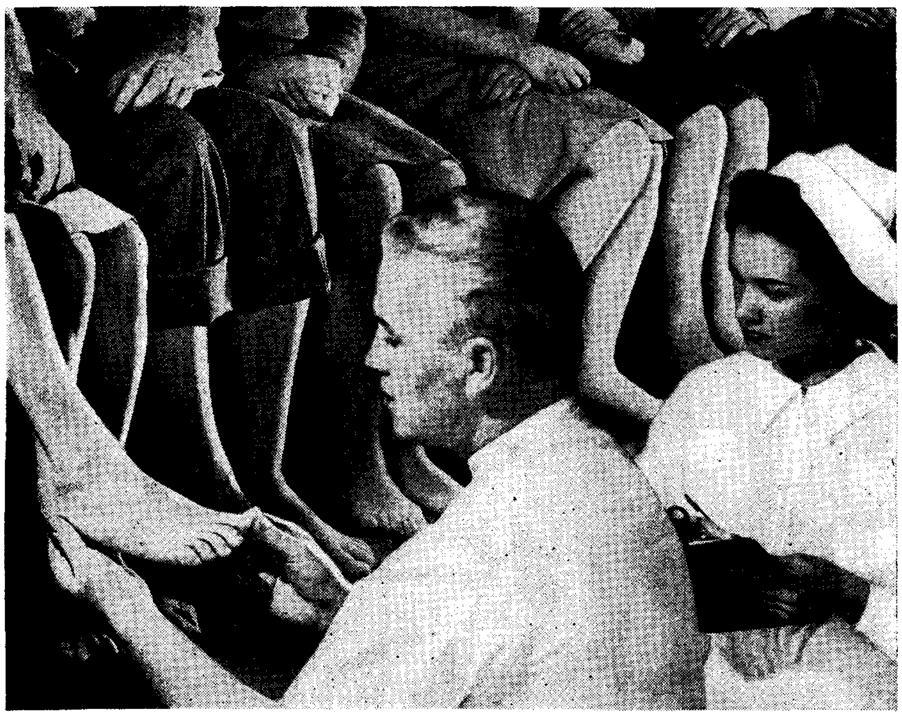

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CHECK YOUR FEET
for these symptoms:

☐ Peeling & cracks between toes
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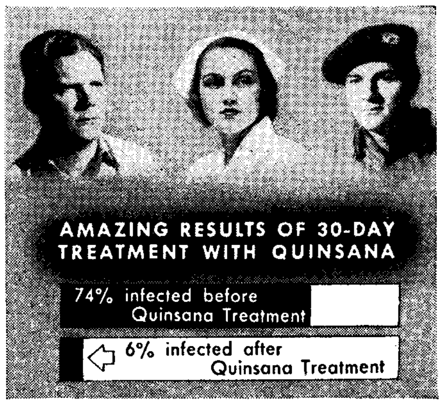
☐ Itching



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her. "Do you want to go into the bar for a while? The dinner music is gone, but—"

"But I hear music," Adrienne said.

MacKinnon explained. He said it was a private party and he couldn't get in.

"Would you want to go out somewhere and dance?" said Adrienne.

MacKinnon wanted to and he couldn't, and now he was a little afraid that this thing that he had looked forward to was going to fizzle out.

"I'd like to," he said, "but I ought to stay around. I'm expecting an important phone call. . . . Look," he added quickly seeing her brows come up, "why couldn't we go up to your place and just have a couple of drinks and shoot the breeze a while."

"Shoot the breeze?"

MacKinnon told her what it meant, finding himself slightly fussed now and eager to convince her.

She tipped her head to one side and looked at him, narrowly at first, with speculation, and then wisely. Finally she made a little pout and nodded.

"All right," she said. "But I will need to be amused."

"I'm in," said MacKinnon happily. "It's a cinch."

"You will give me ten minutes?"

"I know. To get comfortable. . . . I'll order some ice and soda."

"You can order it from the room," Adrienne said. "Until then, you can listen to my radio and be patient."

IN HER living room she snapped on the radio and said she would not be long. When she went into the bedroom he called room service for ice and then fiddled with the radio until he got a news broadcast in English. It was just eleven, and he listened for five minutes. Then the bedroom door opened, and Adrienne called to ask if he couldn't get some music. He found some presently, and in another four or five minutes she came out, wearing a green number this time, a long, full-skirted summery-looking job.

"The ice is on the way," he said. "You look wonderful."

She smiled and stepped to a round mirror over the refectory table. She turned this way and that, poking lightly at her hair and fluffing it a little around the ears and tucking a stray strand up underneath the smooth waves. By the time she was satisfied, the ice and soda came and MacKinnon made the drinks.

She sat in the chair by the floor lamp, telling him about her dinner date as she sipped her drink, and MacKinnon listened as he paced the floor, turning now and then to nod and say something to keep the conversation going. He did not realize how restless he was until she spoke about it.

"Must you pace like the caged lion?"

He turned, finding a faint undertone of annoyance in her voice. "Oh, sorry," he said. "I guess I was thinking."

He finished his drink quickly and made another, a stronger one this time because the first had done him no good. He swung a chair close to hers, but when he sat down, the light was bad, slanting shallowly past her face, so that her eyes were in shadow and he could not tell what she was thinking.

He did not pay much attention to what he was saying; he had the feeling that she was studying him, waiting for some next move, but the shadows baffled him until she turned her head to take some of her drink. He had a quick glimpse then and he saw now a bright detachment in her look and suddenly, thinking about last night, he knew he had again done very badly.

He had been moody and remote, pacing the floor when he should have been attentive. He had done nothing to show he was happy and pleased to be with her, made no gesture of affection to prove that he would rather be here than anyplace in the world, and it was a situation that he recognized at once.

It had happened before, with other girls, and when he was younger, he used to rail against this apathy and try to overcome it with arguments and reason, and it was never any good. He did not always see it coming but he never could mistake its presence, and knowing now that a woman sensed this intangible barrier of moods and thoughts before a man did, he saw that Adrienne had already made up her mind. Whatever he did now (and thinking about it, he found it strange that there was no desire in him to do anything) would be futile. It was best to forget the whole thing.

He laughed and felt oddly relieved, now that there was no further need for pretense. He began to tell her how he had tried to crash the dance in the ballroom, and she made polite comments and let him fix her another drink. But she was relaxed, too, putting her head back, smiling now and then but still watching him, so that he had an idea she knew what he was thinking and even how he felt. It made him feel young and inhibited, and after another half hour, he laughed again and stood up.

"I guess I'm not very good company tonight," he said.

"I am tired, too," Adrienne said, and when she went to the door and he looked more closely, he saw that this was true. Her face seemed slack and the shadows under her eyes were real. She gave him a pat on the shoulder as she opened the door. "I'm sorry, Paul."

"Yeah," he said. "I talked you out of a date with Ramon."

She smiled at that. "No. With Ramon it would have been worse."

Once inside his own room, MacKinnon went straight to the telephone, glancing at his watch as he did so.

"Have there been any calls for me?" he asked.

"Three. A Mr. Vidal has been calling."

"When?"

"At five minutes after eleven and one at eleven twenty and the last about ten minutes ago."

Ten minutes ago. It was now twelve and that meant—

"Just a minute," the operator said. "Here he is now. . . . Go ahead, please."

Leon Vidal started to explain about the other calls, and MacKinnon cut him off. "What's up?" he said.

"Your man is here."

"What? You mean here in the hotel? When did he come?"

"About eleven. Three minutes after, to be exact," Leon Vidal said. "He came by the little arch to the left of the main entrance where the steps lead down to the basement and the pool and the hotel stores."

He said he had been unable to tell where Manuel Zayas went to but had come back to the lobby and called MacKinnon's room. He had been in the lobby since, but he had not seen Zayas.

"Though that would not mean anything," he added, "since he could leave the way he came. I was uncertain whether to stay outside or not, but I thought it was important that I tell you this and—"

"Yeah," MacKinnon said. He knew now why he had missed the first call. When Vidal had phoned his room at five minutes after eleven, he was in Adrienne's room trying to find her some radio music. "All right," he said. "You've done enough, Leon."

"I could wait."

"I've got what I want," MacKinnon lied. "You can get some sleep."

HE HUNG up after promising Vidal he would let him know tomorrow if anything came of his efforts, and began to pace the floor while he considered the possibilities of Zayas' presence. Presently he calmed down a little. The most obvious assumption was that Zayas had come to see him, and if this was so, he might come back.

It was a comforting thought, a sop to his own dereliction, but it was not enough. Zayas might have come to see Denny Clarke, though MacKinnon did not see what *he* could do about that. Then he thought of something else and was instantly disturbed.

Zayas had intimated that MacKinnon had been on the third floor of the Palm Hotel about the time Victor Molina was murdered; he had said as much when he spoke to MacKinnon that afternoon. If this was so, Zayas might also know that Norma Travers had been in or out of room 319.

"So what?" said MacKinnon.

It was nothing to worry about, was it? Zayas was, apparently, a cheap blackmailer,

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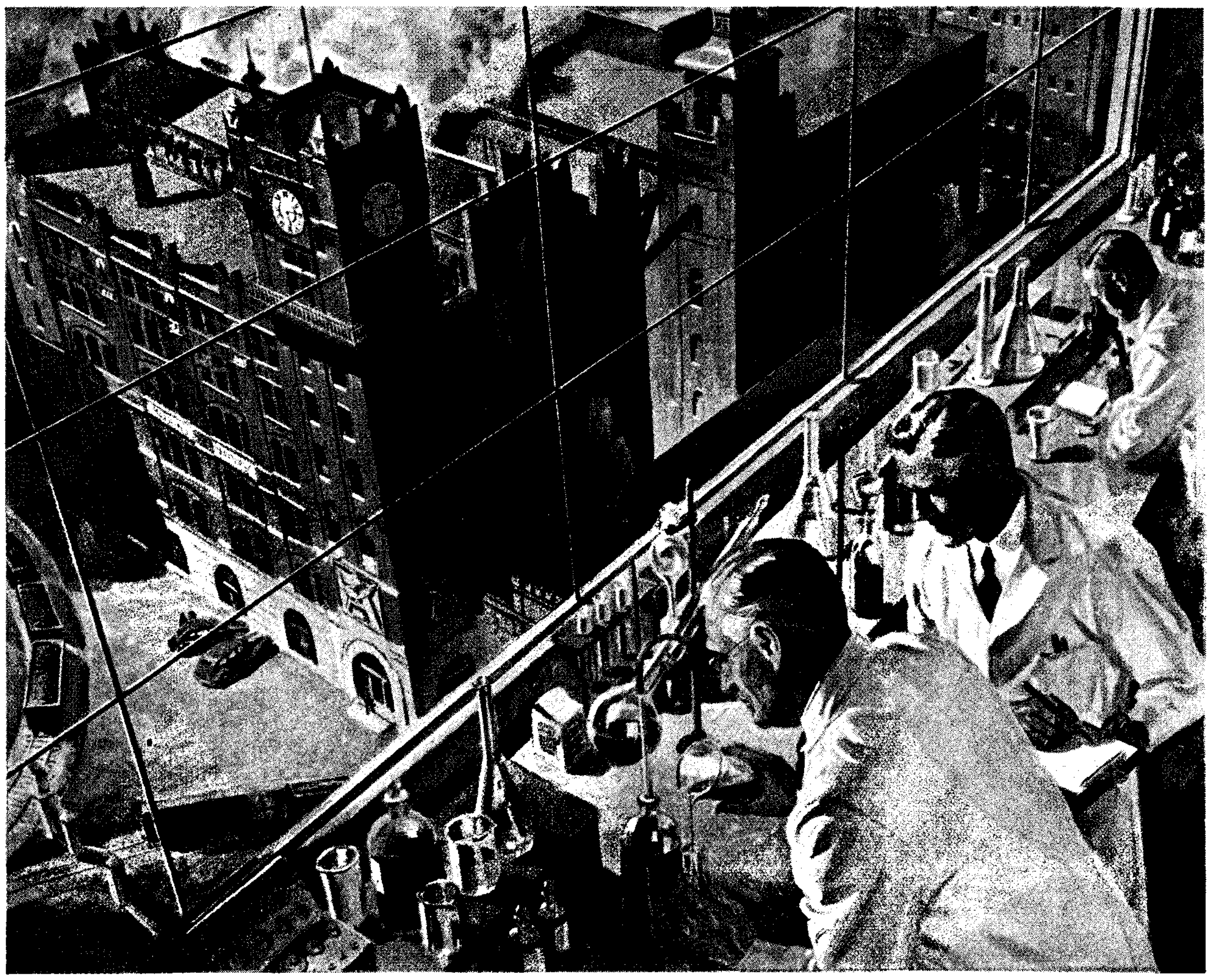
Americans are going to Eat Better..Feel Better..Look Better



Your family is certain to profit by two important wartime developments. First is the discovery that an astounding number of Americans are suffering from malnutrition, many despite incomes that could provide a more nutritious diet. Second is the tremendous concentration of scientific attention on the problem of feeding all of our people better and more economically.

Right now from laboratories all over America, including the ten laboratories of Anheuser-Busch, come indications that this nation stands on the threshold of an entirely new conception of how to nourish itself soundly, but with no sacrifice of zest for the good things of the table.

That this crusade will be productive of not a few actual 'wonder foods' is certain. Moreover, many delicious dishes lacking in sufficient nutrients will be so enriched that they will be a valuable part of the daily fare.

Naturally, Anheuser-Busch, whose reputation rests largely on the fact that it operates the world's largest brewery, is proud of having been one of the first to take part in the national program of nutritional research . . . and proud of the recognition given to its contributions thus far. In future reports, you will be informed of some of the truly fine progress that our laboratory staff has made, not because we wish to boast, but because better nutrition is a subject for the attention of all good citizens.

News dispatches continue to emphasize that the countries devastated or impoverished by the war must be fed. Since a well-nourished, contented nation is not easily incited to aggression against its neighbors, doesn't it seem logical that America's strides toward a better and more economical diet may prove to be one of the world's best guarantees for permanent peace?

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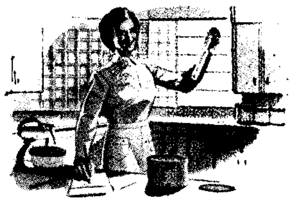
Our laboratory staff is co-operating in a movement under university and hospital supervision to reclaim whole communities from the ravages of diet deficiency. Hundreds of persons threatened with blindness, other afflictions and even death have been restored to robust health.



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Several of our laboratory associates have made amazing progress in producing various yeast strains, each calculated to do a specific job. This recent achievement is comparable to mankind's work of centuries in breeding pedigreed livestock. Present indications are that some of these yeast types *may* in the future help to fight disease as penicillin does.

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he knew something and he wanted to cash in on it the best he could. He had approached MacKinnon and hinted at certain knowledge. . . .

MacKinnon thought of a lot of things, but he could not talk the worry from his mind. He started for the telephone before he remembered that Norma was going to take sleeping pills; then he lifted it anyway, with the hope that she might be wakened.

He could hear the phone ringing when the operator made the connection, and he insisted that she ring a half dozen times before he gave up Then he knew he could not stop there; instinct demanded that he make sure she was all right.

HE WENT quickly down the hall to Norma's room before he remembered he had no key. He started to knock and then realized that if the ringing of the telephone hadn't wakened her, no mere knocking would do so, that to pound would wake everyone in the corridor. In a last, automatic gesture before sending for a key, he reached for the knob, and it turned and he started to enter.

Then, unaccountably, he stopped.

From somewhere inside, a cool wind slid along the floor and swirled about his ankles, spreading a sudden chill across his thighs and fingering the base of his spine. A quick new tension rippled across his stomach and tightened there, and still he waited, not knowing why, knowing only that something was wrong, that the door should not be unlocked.

But it was unlocked, and he was holding it half open, peering into the darkness in that one long moment when instinct held him fast. Then he began to think again and slipped quickly through, closing the door behind him and standing quietly to get his bearings.

He did not turn on the light, for the premonition of danger was strong now and he obeyed its warning. Ahead of him the window was open and he could see the clear night sky beyond; to the left was the bed, its whiteness outlined vaguely in the surrounding darkness.

He said, "Norma," and listened, and there was no sound but his own breathing.

He held his breath and waited, hearing now the thudding of his pulse. Presently he isolated that and listened, and still there was no other sound. All about him the quiet was absolute, and suddenly he realized this could not be.

There had to be another sound. If one breathed, there was always a sound. . . .

Fear struck at him then, crowding all else from his mind. He forgot about the light. He had no thought now but only the one desire: to reach the bed.

He nearly did. He took two steps before he tripped. Then, even as he pitched forward, throwing out his hands to catch himself, he knew what he had stumbled over.

His hands saved him and he made a bridge of his body so that he would not hit the thing beneath him. He scrambled to one side and gained his knees, fear driving him now, his body numb and cold all over.

His hands touched a shoulder, and it was limp and yielding under his grasp, and he slid his hands along, feeling the fabric of the coat. Then, finally, he knew. The breath whistled out of him and he began to breathe again.

He swallowed the hardness out of his throat, and a little of the muscular resiliency came back so that he could move without strain. This, he knew now, was a man. A dead man apparently, though his own hand was so icy and damp he could not tell whether there was a pulse or not.

He simply accepted the fact and pushed back on his haunches, and suddenly this new thought struck him and the tightness came back. This man was dead, but even that did not explain the silence he had heard. There was still no breathing in this room but his own.

He jerked his head around, and now his eyes were accustomed to the darkness so that he could see the bedspread. He stared. Then he got up slowly, knowing that the bed was empty, but stepping close to run his hands along the top to make sure. It was empty, all right. It had not been turned down or slept in. . . .

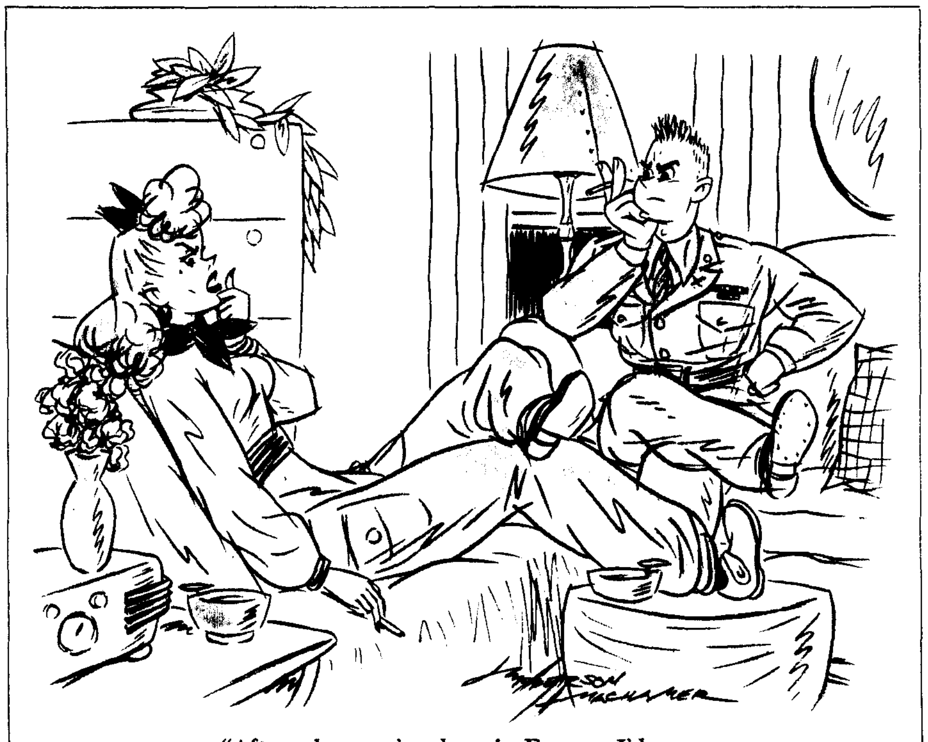
FOR a long moment he stood there. When he stepped back he found it required a definite physical effort to go to the window and close the shutters. He was in no hurry. There was nothing he wanted to do and he was very tired, now that reaction had set in. He could see the outline of the body on the floor and he detoured around it on his way to the light switch.

When it clicked and the room was bright, he blinked against the brightness and sat down on the edge of the bed.

He had known somehow that this would be Manuel Zayas, so that it was no surprise to see his face and crumpled body. He was on his back, his eyes closed, still looking young and with no expression at all on his swart face.

His hat had fallen off, and MacKinnon saw the stain on the front of the coat and the straight slim handle of the knife sticking up from the left side of the chest. He recognized that handle and found it odd that he felt no shock in seeing it there. It was Norma's, brought back from Florence one time by her father. There was a metal sheath for it somewhere, and Norma had kept it in her desk to use occasionally for a letter opener and paper cutter.

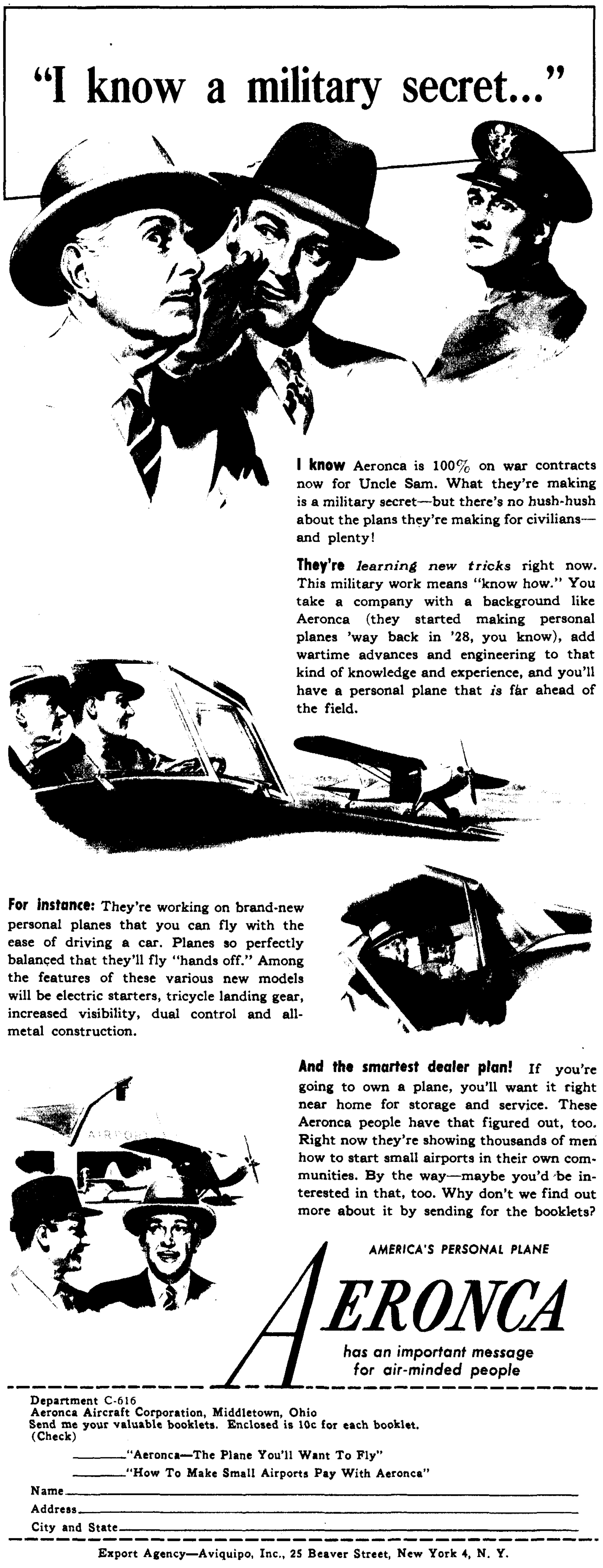
(To be concluded next week)



COLLIER'S

"After what you've done in Europe, I'd certainly ask for more money for the Jap job!"

JEFFERSON MACHAMER



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Fascist Finale

Continued from page 21

their huge banquet table where roughly dressed Partisans put elbows on the glistening tablecloth and sang to Mussolini's death. As one Partisan put it: "Dal Verma doesn't deserve to be a count—he's a good man."

After loosening the Fascist tooth all winter, the Partisans began to extract it on Tuesday, April 24th. Three thousand workers at O. M. Motor Factory suddenly seized the plant, imprisoned thirty Fascist employees and turned the buildings into a series of fortresses. The Germans sent an armored train charging toward the factory but other Partisans mined the rails and wrecked the train. That was the Germans' last move to hold Milan. After that they remained quietly in their barracks.

As soon as the Partisans learned on April 26th that Mussolini had fled, they burst into the city hall and sounded a steady blast on the air-raid alarm, the long-planned signal that the Partisans had seized the government offices. Milan reverberated with exploding bazooka shells and the crash of tommy guns as Partisans made their business calls.

For the first time in Italy, Allied authorities had encountered Partisans who were calmly efficient about killing their enemies. There was considerable flag-waving and singing and promiscuous shooting, too, but the Partisans didn't let their celebrations interfere with their grimmer job. South of Rome the Allies had received no Partisan support except for Intelligence purposes. North of Rome up to Florence and Bologna, the Partisans had repeatedly offered their assistance, but when the shooting started, they were not too dependable.

North of the Po—well, that's where Partisans knew how to run their own revolution. They killed Mussolini and his henchmen. They killed 1,000 persons in five days in and around Milan. Some Partisans thought the city was still not cleaned of Fascists when the Americans finally entered on Sunday afternoon April 29th and by their presence ended the assassinations. The fighting was about over; the even more difficult struggle for stability was already beginning but with less excitement.

At the Palazzo del Governo, there is a cobblestoned courtyard, and up a flight of stairs, there is a long, high-ceilinged chamber that had been Mussolini's office. There behind a large and well-ordered desk sat Riccardo Lombardi, the new prefect of Milan Province. When he rose he was tall and lanky, with a slight stoop to his broad shoulders, and a lean, tanned face.

"We all welcome you," he said. "Whatever you want we will get you."

He was reminded that the American Army was not yet in the city—only a few correspondents.

"Correspondents are quite enough. We liberated our city by ourselves and we can run it," he came back, half smiling.

A Man Capable of High Service

He spoke Italian as it should be spoken, with the precise diction and melodic cadence that marks a man of education and self-control. He had clear eyes and a restrained, courteous manner, with an air of concentration but without the cold, impassive expression that makes so many would-be revolutionary leaders look ruthless. He had the steady gaze of an honest man and the assurance of a man who knows what he's about. At this stage in the revolution, it is too early to say definitely who will emerge on top or what kind of men they'll turn out to be, but Lombardi seems to be a man who is bound to play an important role for the good of his country.

At the moment his position seems to be one of the most important among the executives of northern Italy. He was one of the three who negotiated with Mussolini on the ex-Duce's last day in Milan and tried to persuade him to surrender. Of the other two, one was General Raffaele Cadorna, then supreme commander of the Partisans' military organization in northern Italy, called the *Corpo di Volontari Della Libertá*, who has since been named commander in chief of the Italian armed forces. Cadorna is the son of General Luigi Cadorna, one of the heroes of the first World War.

The third negotiator, representing the political side of the revolution, as Cadorna represented the military and Lombardi the executive, was Achille Marazza, lawyer and member of the *Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale Alta Italia* (Committee of National Liberation for Northern Italy). Marazza, an austere and determined man, is a member of the Christian Democrat (Catholic) Party, which represents the conservative viewpoint but includes a strongly Socialist wing.

The Communist influence seemed to be less evident in northern Italy than confident predictions of the Communists in Rome would have led one to expect. The Committee has its Communist member, like the local committees of every town, province and region of Italy, north and south. He is Emilio Sereni, a man of medium height and stocky build, with a scar on the right side of his face and an air of intense concentration. Sereni said the Communist system was the only salvation for Italy, but that it should be achieved in democratic fashion by an election in which the Communists would undoubtedly win. That, of course, is the opposite of what the other parties expect.

How much influence the Communists will ultimately have in the new Italy only time can tell. At the beginning they were cooperating so closely with other parties and following the forms of Western democracy so faithfully that the line between Communist, Socialist, Actionist and Republican was very hard to draw.

Communism—with Restrictions

The Communists have won a certain reputation among workers and farmers, which the other parties are trying hard to catch up with and surpass. It does not seem likely that the Communists of Italy will try to impose a proletarian dictatorship on this country or try to go much further than the other democratic parties toward socializing means of production and abolishing private property. Undoubtedly they wouldn't succeed at present, and there seems to be little danger of civil war—provided the economic revival of Italy takes place fast enough to avoid the disorders that come from mass unemployment and starvation.

The Communists don't have any monopoly on the idea of socialism; most Italians seem to want it in one form or another, and the recent Fascist government of northern Italy took several steps toward installing it. There are at least three other political parties which offer the Italians a kind of semi-Socialist state.

The Action Party is the one which made the biggest splash in Milan during those first days with its newspapers, wall posters and dramatic slogans. The Action Party demands an Italy without the monarchy, without the Bonomi government and with the means of production controlled by the workers. Riccardo Lombardi, the prefect, is an Actionist. But the Actionists are no proletarians, and many members of the party are from rich families, in contrast to the usual conception of Partisan revolutionaries. The party's offices are now installed in a beautiful apartment in a fashionable section of Milan, where expensive black-market dinner parties are held amid all the accouterments of wealth and comfort: indirect lighting, roses on the linen tablecloths, uniformed butlers and maids and—priceless luxury anywhere in Italy—hot water in the sunken bathtub.

The conversation is polite and even includes the fashionable prejudices of the unenlightened aristocrat—one woman who hates Negroes, and another who fears Bolsheviks. These are the people, of all classes and all political complexions, who are co-operating with the Communists in northern Italy, because they hope these Communists won't turn out to be Bolsheviks.

The purge of the Fascists is the first stage of what the Italians call *epurazione*. In northern Italy as in the south, it is the men who ran the Fascist regime and the peculiarly corrupt and ruthless way they did it that the democratic parties are revolting against. The conception of a centralized authoritarian government, which Fascism took over from older Italian traditions and developed to an extreme, hasn't yet been seriously challenged by most Italians. What there was of Socialism in the Mussolini system, the Italians want to keep and extend; but the governmental processes and social viewpoint of the Western democracies are strange to the Italians. As yet, there is no indication that Italy is prepared to make much use of them.

The whole economic picture in northern Italy is much more hopeful than might have been expected. Because the Germans didn't withdraw from Milan, they didn't indulge in their usual wholesale destruction, and they surrendered without ruining the huge hydroelectric plant in the Alps, from which Italy gets most of its power. Some factories have been hurt by bombing; some machinery and some railroad tracks are missing. But according to Herman Targiani, local manager of the General Electric Company, the factories of northern Italy are ready to work at 90 per cent of capacity as soon as they get coal and transportation.

Some railroads are still running, and the damage they've suffered is small compared to that in the south. Except along the main lines through the passes to Austria, which the Fifteenth Air Force kept under steady bombardment, few railroad bridges or tunnels have been damaged. Nor have roads suffered. Probably several thousand German trucks have been captured intact and can help Italy's strained transportation system when gasoline is provided.

Farming also continues virtually unimpeded in the area which is Italy's breadbasket. The battle moved so fast that, except in vineyards, orchards and truck gardens between Ravenna and Bologna, where the Eighth Army spent the winter, there has been little destruction.

Northern Italy has always been the richest part of the country and now its margin of superiority is greater than ever. The people here know it. They're full of confidence and they expect to have the deciding voice in Italy's political affairs. Soon after Americans arrived here, a delegation from the Committee of National Liberation of Northern Italy went to Rome to tell Bonomi's cabinet what is expected of it.

When Prince Humbert made a tour of northern Italy he tried to sound out local reaction and gain some popular support by making public appearances. The Bonomi Cabinet refers to him respectfully as *Luogotenente*—lieutenant general of the realm and personal symbol of the monarchic tradition. In Milan the Partisans refer to him somewhat derisively as the Prince of Piedmont—the little mountain state from which the House of Savoy originally came.

Humbert got a terrifically enthusiastic reception in Bologna where he stopped first. From there, he went to Verona, Mantua, Parma, Brescia, Bergamo and several other smaller towns, sending his aide-de-camp before him to see whether he would be well received. Finally he came secretly to Milan, but after the house where he was staying was machine-gunned, presumably by extremists opposed to the monarchy, he went away again. He is somewhat in the position of a political candidate campaigning for election.

If the royal house is finally overthrown, it is likely to be not so much a gesture of political revolution as another stage in the *epurazione* process—vengeance on a family which allowed Mussolini to get his start and is still suspected of shielding high-ranking Fascists from punishment by the Partisans.

The Partisans themselves present a problem, but it is less formidable than it looked before northern Italy was liberated. The Partisans are immensely romantic; most of them are young and handsome, and they enjoy swashbuckling about with their rifles shooting into the air and showing off before their friends and families. Many of them are excellent soldiers; others are mere show-offs.

As soon as the insurrection was over in Milan, Lombardi ordered all arms to be turned in to the various Partisan headquarters and threatened prompt punishment for looting. After their first few days of exuberance, many of the Partisans turned in their weapons and went home—those that had homes to go to. Disarmament for the rest is to be accomplished in the usual fashion by holding a parade at which all Partisans will stack their arms and receive certificates from the Fifth Army. These certificates will entitle them to wear service ribbons and receive bonuses, subsidies and other public assistance for themselves and their families, all of which is being arranged by Mauro Scoccimarro, Communist Minister for Occupied Territories, through the Bonomi government at Rome. Those Partisans who want to continue army life are being inducted into the Italian army.

Basically an Economic Problem

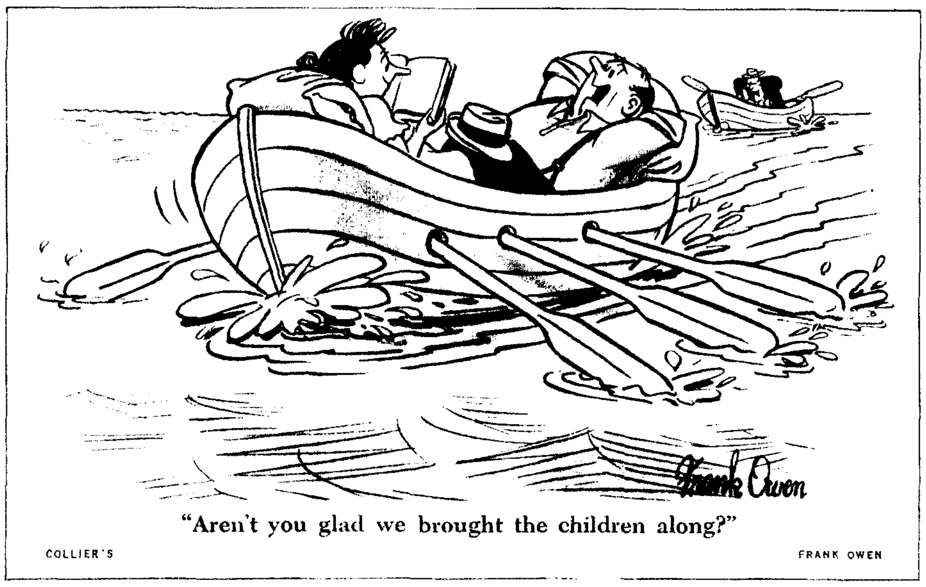
The Bonomi government, through Scoccimarro, has undertaken to find jobs as fast as possible for demobilized Partisans, giving them the same advantages as members of the regular Italian army and giving them whatever assistance they need until they get the jobs. Ultimately the Partisan problem, like everything else, resolves itself into getting the Italian economy back on its feet.

All these are matters for which the Allies are going to find themselves accepting some responsibility in the coming months. Although there won't be any army of occupation for Italy, Allied troops will be stationed here to secure the lines of communication and supply with occupation troops in Austria.

Similarly, AMG has found northern Italy so well organized economically and politically that its problems are less complicated than in the south, but AMG will have to function for several months at least.

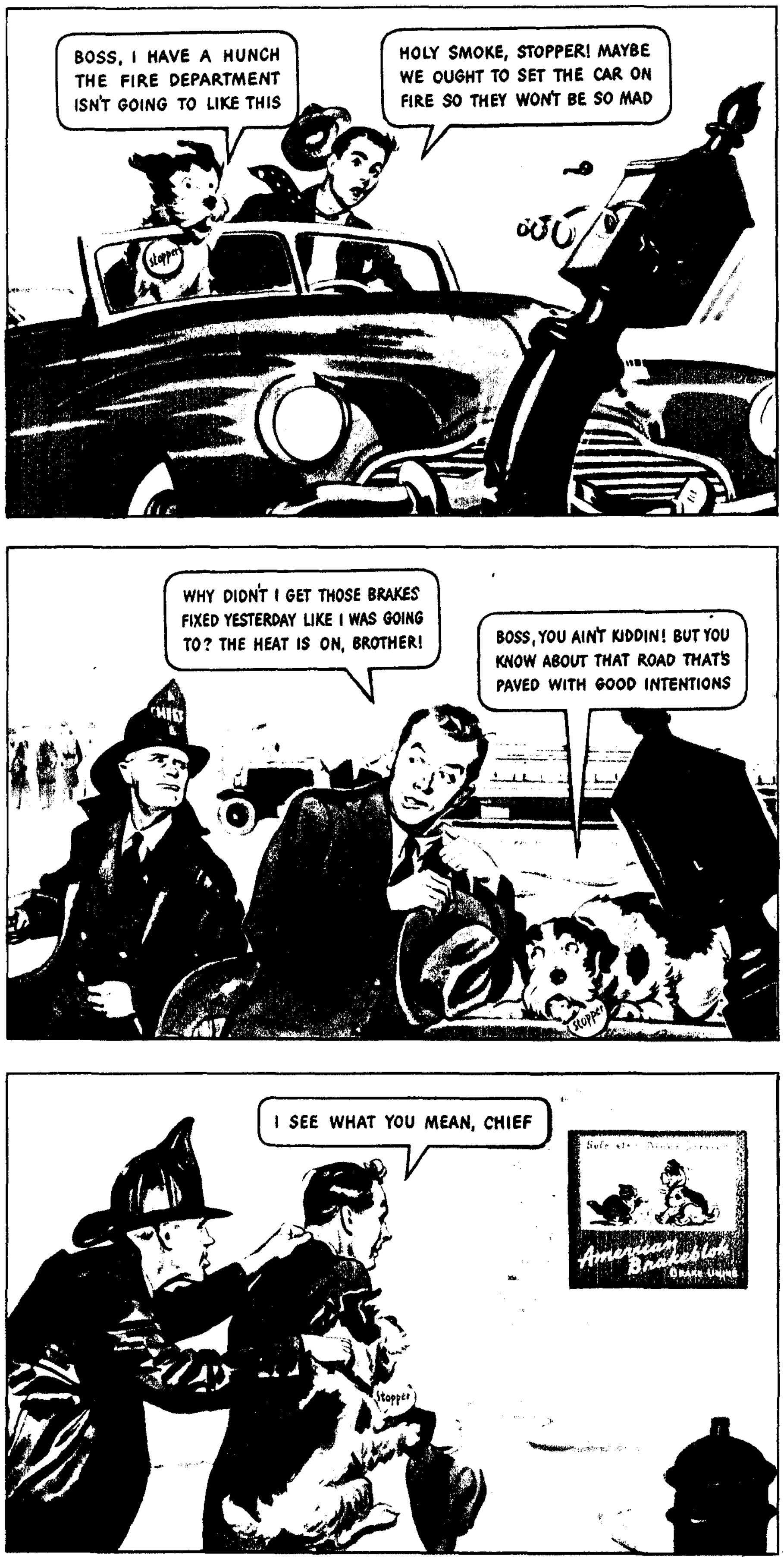
Lastly there remains the material aid—coal, oil, gasoline, trucks, ships and other things—which Italy is impatiently waiting for the Allies to provide. Probably the greatest, and most hopeful difference between northern and southern Italy is that up here in Milan, people don't spend their time asking the Allies for help. They seem to know how to help themselves.

THE END



"Aren't you glad we brought the children along?"

COLLIER'S FRANK OWEN


BOSS, I HAVE A HUNCH THE FIRE DEPARTMENT ISN'T GOING TO LIKE THIS
HOLY SMOKE, STOPPER! MAYBE WE OUGHT TO SET THE CAR ON FIRE SO THEY WON'T BE SO MAD
Stopper
WHY DIDN'T I GET THOSE BRAKES FIXED YESTERDAY LIKE I WAS GOING TO? THE HEAT IS ON, BROTHER!
BOSS, YOU AIN'T KIDDIN! BUT YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT ROAD THAT'S PAVED WITH GOOD INTENTIONS
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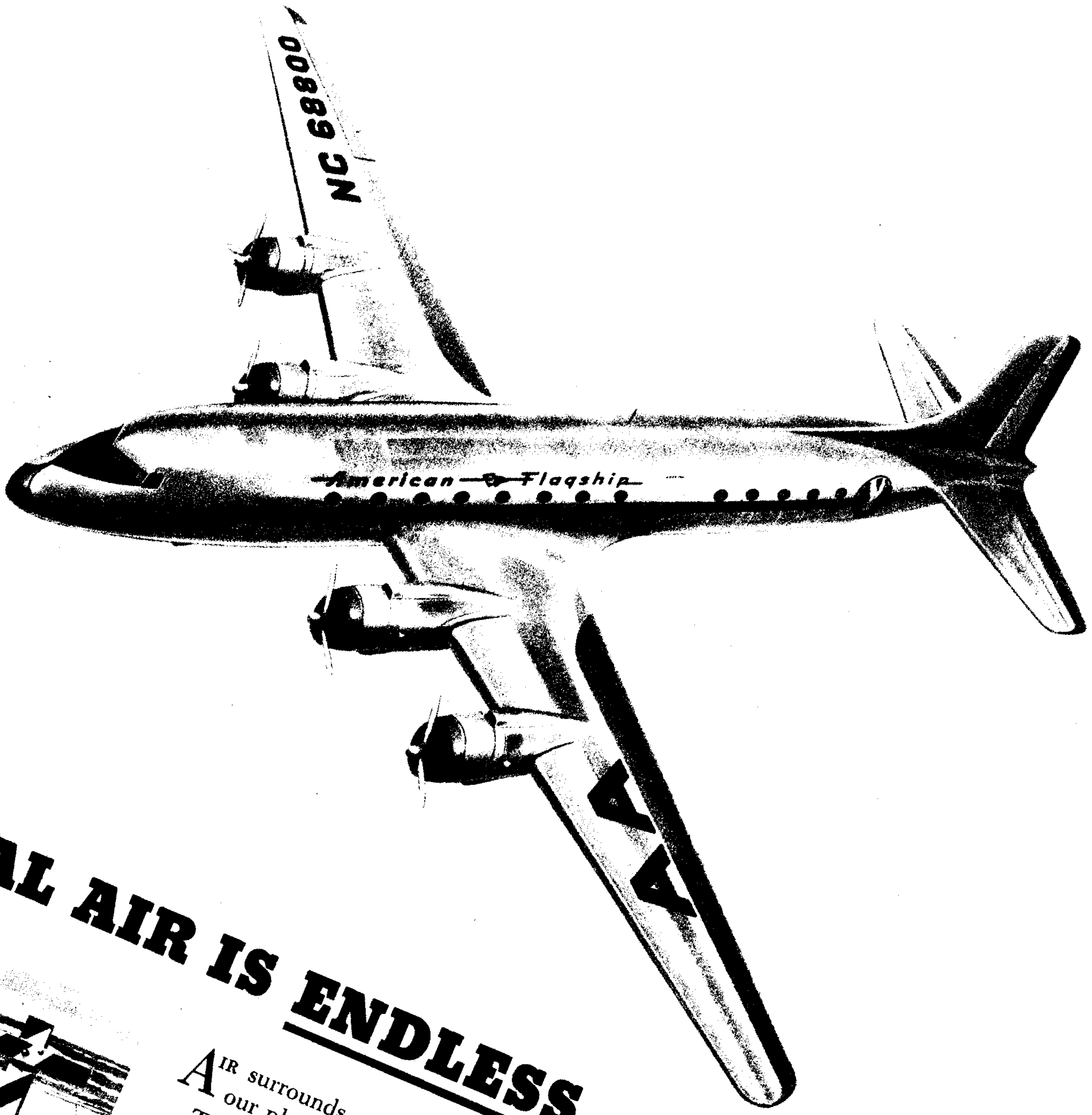
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THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ROUTE OF THE FLAGSHIPS

Terror in Japan

Continued from page 12

dysentery, and "in every classroom daily, there are, on an average, one student vomiting and two being sent home with dizziness."

Hunger and fatigue go hand in hand. Apathetically, a worker reports that sleep does men no good "because we are worn out." When, however, the ten days of terror had ended, the government canceled even the meager two days of rest a month granted until then.

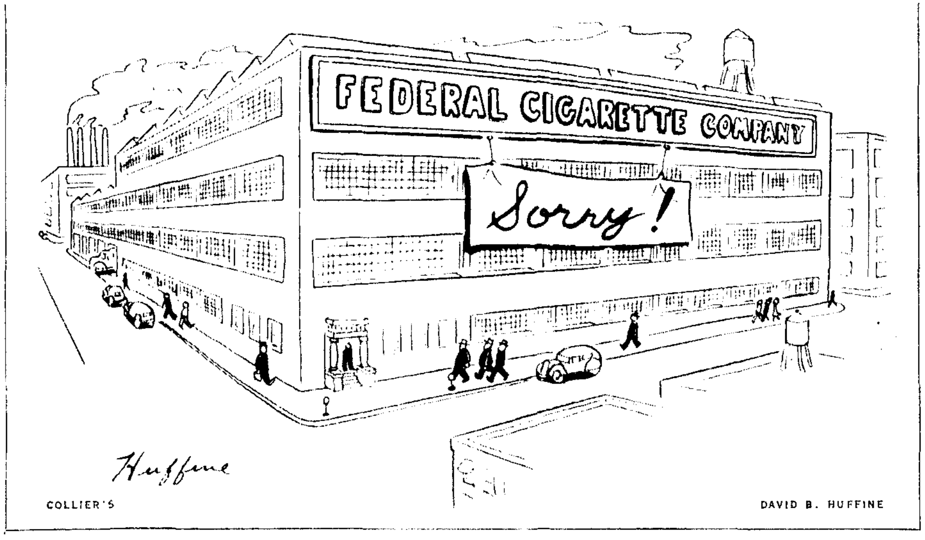
But nothing gives a truer picture of Japan's distress than the broadcasts and private radiograms which fill her air. In them are exposed the worries, the hopes and secrets of her little men and her leaders. By the thousands, these messages flash between Japan and every corner of her crumbling empire to be intercepted by our watchful monitors.

A gendarmerie chief on a dinky, local Japanese station: "Some people have become listless. We must hold firm to our faith, we must keep our heads."

A station in Tokyo: "Until further notice, service is suspended on the following streetcar lines . . ."

An unidentified station in Japan: "Travelers planning trips on the Tokaido and Chuo lines are warned communications have been blocked."

A station in Korea: "Pamphlets dropped by the enemy must not deceive us. Surrender them to the nearest police station at once. . . . Enemy broadcasts must be studiously avoided. . . . The Americans and the British cheated the Italians with their broadcasts. . . ."



A station in Formosa: "Most of our contacts with the homeland have been severed since the enemy landed on Okinawa. Formosa must struggle alone. . . ."

And another: "Due to the change in war conditions, items such as kitchen pots, electric bulbs, umbrellas can no longer be issued. . . . Several families must now use a common pot for cooking, thus saving fuel and making other pots available to the state."

From Nanking, a commercial radiogram to Tokyo: "Business impossible."

From the Mitsubishi supertrust in Tokyo to Saigon: "For lack of transportation, your 1,000 cases deteriorated. Only way is to cancel contracts. Excuse."

From Indo-China to Tokyo: "Cancel the contracts, since there is no hope of shipping out the ordered jute."

And from every corner come grisly tidings of personal grief. From a town in Japan to Wuhu, in China: "Aiko dead." From Peiping to Japan: "Kiyoko's ashes sent by air. . . ." From Shanghai to Numagi: "Passenger boat full. Must wait another three months." From Takayama to a worried rubber trader in Rangoon, himself already menaced by the approaching British: "Your mother evacuated. . . ." From Bangkok to Osaka: "Am in favor of evacuation. . . ."

And, as the only note of comic relief, a message from the German Minister in Bangkok to Reichsminister Reichsfuehrer S. S. Himmler: "In faithful loyalty I think of you on your birthday with best wishes. Heil Hitler!"

Air raids, hunger, weariness, evacuation, the sense of defeat, the collapse of Japan's allies, all these intertwine into a pattern of flesh and spirit in acute distress. Less than a fortnight after the fall of Iwo comes the invasion of Okinawa, still closer home. The ten days are followed by other days and nights of terror.

To keep the spirit up, the government resorts to the familiar totalitarian devices: police terror, scare campaigns, skillfully guided mass hysteria, and lies without limit. When Americans advance on Okinawa, the Jap navy blandly claims it has sunk or damaged 21 American carriers, 19 battleships, 55 cruisers and 16 "battleships or cruisers."

But all such claims are only a drug which can give Japan momentary hope, but cannot save her. It does no good any more to boast of victories, or to conceal the imminence of American invasion. Thus Japan's leaders let out some of the terrifying truth.

The Premier himself issues the warning: "We must be prepared for the conversion of our homeland into a battlefield. . . ."

The people of Japan are called on to arm themselves. "The bamboo spear is an excellent weapon," declares a broadcast. "Our warriors have fought with it in all their battles. Select a bamboo cane, sharpen it, dab the point with vegetable oil. Such a spear would easily stab through the bellies of our foes."

But even more drastic action is needed. On the last of the ten days of terror, the government introduces a bill to create a "Fortress Japan." Under this bill, the army can take over property, direct production, freeze labor.

Japan's toughest generals, who once carved the map of Asia, are called back to defend her own soil. The Home Defense armies are split in two, to permit continued resistance in one half of Japan if the other falls. Government and economy are decentralized, to avert paralysis should Tokyo be lost. The premier talks of "area by area" defense.

A rigorous campaign is begun against *yamitorihiki,* the black market or "bargaining in the dark." The government admits the failure of its rationing program and estimates the army of "black marketeers" at one million. They are rounded up by the thousand and tossed into jails already overflowing with men and women arrested for "dangerous thought."

In Tokyo, over a ten-day period, 18,500 people are hauled off to police stations. Of these, 6,500 are vaguely accused of sabotage and 3,900 of "wicked behavior."

Old parties, which failed to drum up popular enthusiasm, go into the discard. In their stead comes a new outfit, headed by the 70-year-old flabby-fleshed jingoist, General Minami, who in 1931 engineered the rape of Manchuria. In a beer hall, a group of paunchy men, once known as "moderates," launches a "Party for a Twenty-Year War."

"Invasion!" warns the press. "Invasion!" cries the radio. Foreign Ministry officials solemnly tell the people mass castrations are being planned by the invaders. A commentator declares: "If we ever surrender, we'll be treated like the Rumanians."

But nothing gets more fanfare than Kamikaze, which means Divine Wind, or the tempest which centuries ago dispersed an armada of Mongol invaders. The word caught Japanese fancy when it was attached to the "suicide fliers" trying to crash into American men-of-war. When, with proper guidance, Kamikaze took hold of the susceptible Japanese mind, Japan's leaders channeled the hysteria into new fields.

Japanese submarines, one of the spectacular failures of this war, now boast of ramming Allied warships in true Kamikaze style. In factories, Kamikaze brigades work 16 to 18 hours, in an effort to increase production. In the country, Kamikaze teams drain swamps or till wastelands hitherto thought useless. Throughout the land, Kamikaze units are being formed for unspecified tasks beginning the day of the invasion. Thus, through terror, false hope and skillfully guided hysteria, Japan's rulers mobilize the nation's strength for the next great battles. And Americans must not underestimate the fury and determination with which the coming battles will be fought. Japan is hard hit but not by any means fatally hurt. Her morale is still firm, her hatred for us is still unquenched, her punch still painful. Our admirals and generals want you to give a lot of hard, sober thought to the facts below. Each of them means time, stubborn effort, American lives.

First, the Japanese war machine is still powerful. Nowhere is it near the bottom of the reserve barrel. The army still has 3,000,000 men, with 2,000,000 more in reserve. Most of these can be expected to fight with skill and fury in the defense of their own land.

Our airmen have helped to send thousands of Japan's best pilots to their end. But her air force still packs a powerful wallop, and despite the heavy pounding, her airplane factories were still turning out a thousand planes a month in May.

The Jap Navy Lies in Wait

Shorn of its best ships and ablest admirals, Japan's navy is still a constant menace. It has the twin advantage of being close to home bases and knowing tomorrow's weather ahead of us. Under cover of a storm, it can still sneak up for a painful blow. Even more than the army, the navy is tough, resolute, fanatical.

Second, we have only begun to destroy Japan's industry. As we have found out in Germany, this takes time and much more muscle than we have yet been able to supply. Some of Japan's industry has already burrowed deep into the ground; some has been decentralized; some shifted to Korea and Manchuria. Much of Japan's war output comes from the one-family "factories," working as subcontractors. It takes time to bomb them out.

Third, Japan's morale as yet remains solid. If we have learned any lesson in Europe, it is that air blitz does not knock peoples out of war. There is no reason to believe the Japanese will be any softer than the British, the Russians, the Germans or the Chinese.

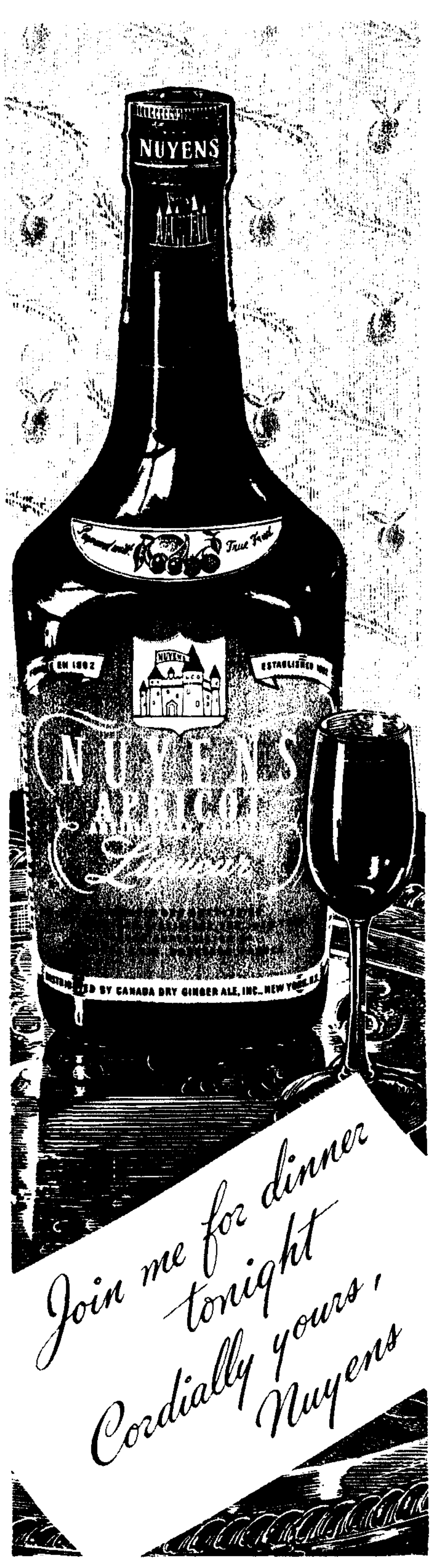
Fourth, Japan now fights in her front yard, while we have to cart all our supplies nearly halfway around the world. Each man we land on Japan's beaches will need five to ten tons of supplies in the first month. U. S. Army supply chiefs figure that a force of 250,000 men, small as invasion forces go, will need in the first thirty days 700,000 different items, from buttons to bridges, for the total weight of 1,900,000 tons. This, too, means time.

Fifth, despite the blockade, Japan has had two years to accumulate stock piles of supplies she needs to wage war. She still probably has enough aluminum and copper for a year, gasoline for eighteen months, rubber for five years, and tin for eight.

The Americans whose business it is to weigh all these factors, both material and intangible, are not sanguine over the prospects of a quick knockout.

Maybe this is one reason why Washington, while hoping for fate's favors, soberly girds itself for a war that might not end until the distant spring of 1947.

THE END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Probably the greatest gift for Father this year is the chance to be with his family

EVERY DAD HAS HIS DAY

By Henry L. Jackson

FATHER'S DAY is a purely American custom. It is incomprehensible anywhere else. It is the day you break down and admit that fathers are a fine thing. This year, with many fathers home who haven't been around for a long time, Father's Day is doubly important. The idea is to let Dad know that Mamma may get the hugs and kisses, but he's a great guy. You get the notion across by buying Dad a gift that's right up his alley. Figure his hobby, then give him something he can use in conjunction with it.

For example, if Dad prides himself as being the world's best Victory gardener, you have considerable latitude in your choice of a gift: a pair of denim slacks will be a welcome addition to his wardrobe; a long or short-sleeved sport shirt is useful; also colorful anklet hose; a poplin jacket; a cotton T shirt; a pep shirt (modernized sweat shirt); a stitched fabric hat; these are all useful commodities that should please Dad and that he can use even when he's not out worrying the vegetables.

If puttering around a workbench in his spare time is his idea of a happy day he'll be particularly pleased with a workbench apron, with its handy, roomy pockets. Tools are a happy thought here.

If your father is a mighty hunter, quick on the trigger, a bright red hunting hat makes him a happy hunter; he'll also appreciate a bright plaid shirt, the bolder the better; or take your pick of wool hose; a warm, lined vest; shearling slippers that go under his regular hunting boots or may be worn after hunting—or warm mitts, or a substantial belt, or one of the many types of hunting jackets with alpaca lining that hunters cherish and show off to their friends.

If golf is Dad's game, you have no problem at all. He can always use slacks, sport shirts, a lightweight rain jacket, a poplin rain hat, a belt, wool hose or a fine pair of sunglasses.

If Dad's an amateur angler, he's always interested in additions to fishing equipment. He'll also like lightweight poplin fishing trousers; a fishing or rain jacket; a sleeveless sweater; a sport shirt or a fabric hat.

If attending strictly to business is Dad's occupation as well as recreation, get him a handsome wallet, business shirts, ties, handkerchiefs, suspenders, lisle hose, a tie pin or holder, cuff links.

For summer, vacation and resort wear, you will find a great many things from which to choose. Fathers don't object to color in sportswear, so get him colorful sport shirts; swim trunks—some are plain, some very fancy—you know which type he'll go for; a sleeveless or long-sleeve coat-style sweater; loafer coats, tweed sport jackets and lightweight linenlike jackets are perfect for informal wear. Colorful beach robes and beach clogs make perfect gifts. And don't forget that all men welcome gift certificates for hats which they can pick to suit themselves. Get one at his favorite shop, give it to him in the miniature hatbox that most stores supply along with the gift certificate.

Some fathers ski. In that case they're push-overs for fancy ski sweaters, wool mitts, shells or after-ski slippers. These things can't be used until the skiing season gets under way, but they're welcome nonetheless.

Ties, once considered a rather unimaginative gift choice, are important today, when Dad's tie rack doesn't bulge as it did back in the days of peace. Print ideas in bright colors are indicated for summer wear; lightweight wool mixtures go well with country clothes; small, geometric patterns are welcomed by conservatives; and bow ties, if he likes them, are a happy thought.

Looking Over the Situation

If you're really stumped on this gift business, you might take a look at Dad's closet and see what he needs in the way of replacements. Perhaps his raincoat has reached the disreputable stage. In that case, get him a fly-front number with raglan or regular set-in sleeves, in natural tan color. If he's a well-built gent he might go for a trench type of raincoat, double-breasted, with all-around belt. Raincoats are useful for week-end wear as substitute topcoats over sport clothes. Lightweight cotton poplin rain hats are practical, can be worn with his raincoat or for all types of sportswear. Not expensive.

Gloves, too, add up to an appreciated gift. Gray is more or less a stock shade, but smart for town and business wear are the dark, reddish-brown goat or capeskin variety. Pigskin comes in many colors, is long-wearing and fine for country and sports use.

Men who travel find use for the fitted toilet kit with separate compartments for shaving brush, soap, toothbrush, manicure necessities. These range in price from very low to very high, and you will find a wide assortment available in the shops.

If he's gadget-minded, you might look into the matter of plastic tie racks, plastic clothes hangers with well-shaped shoulders, unusual cigarette boxes with sporting-motif decorations.

The main thing is to let Dad know that this is *his* day. You might see that arrangements are made to have his favorite dish served at dinner, and his pet dessert. Perhaps the family can plan a hike or picnic at which Dad can show off his superiority about outdoor life. If he's a barbecue enthusiast, present him with a chef's cap and apron, plan a day around the back yard with Dad supervising the grill work. This leads to such thoughts in the gift line as asbestos gloves, outdoor cookery books, utensils for handling grilled food. And even if he burns up the dinner, himself or the house, tell him he's wonderful.

If your father has just come out of the service, or is about to, there is no end to the number of things he can use: pajamas, underwear, a new bathrobe, slippers, men's toiletries, shaving accessories, brushes, combs, etc. Then, too, there's the standard selection covering smokers' needs: pipes, tobaccos, pouches, humidors, ash trays, lighters (when you can get them), cigars and so forth.

Father's Day is the day on which bachelors don't get presents. But their fathers do. ★★★

PHOTOGRAPH FOR COLLIER'S BY HUSTON-PIX

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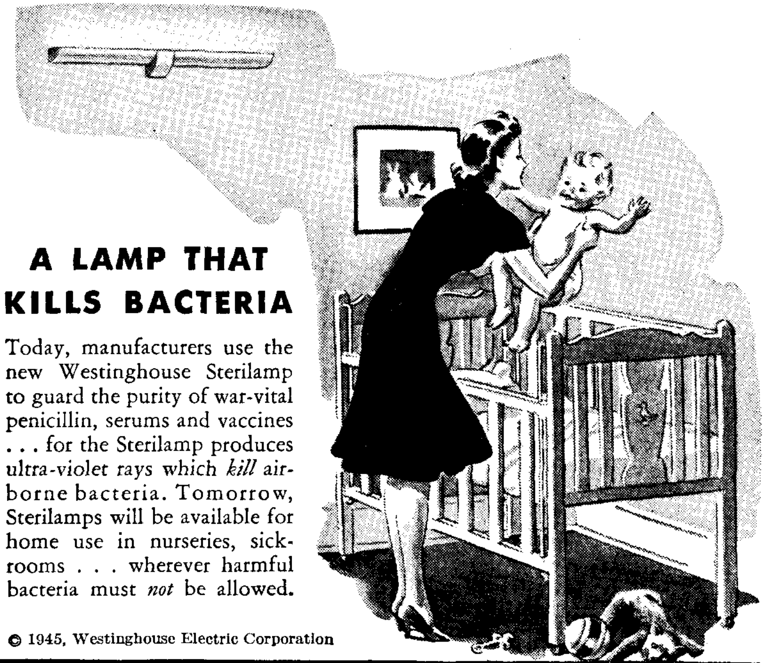
for these bright eyes

Will your child see as clearly tomorrow as today? For remember, Nature never intended young eyes for close work—reading and writing under artificial light. No, they were designed for *daylight* seeing. That's why they need *lots* of light—glareless, shadowless, well-diffused light, for *every* indoor seeing task. Fortunately, long-lasting Westinghouse bulbs are only 10¢ for the 25, 40, and 60 watt sizes—and only 15¢ for the big 100 watt size. Yes, that's all it costs to fill every light socket with these fine, bright bulbs. For better See-ability, better buy Westinghouse—without delay! Write for the free, illustrated booklet on modern lighting "The Lighter Side of Life." *Free* from Dept. R-5, Westinghouse Electric Corporation, Lamp Division, Bloomfield, New Jersey.



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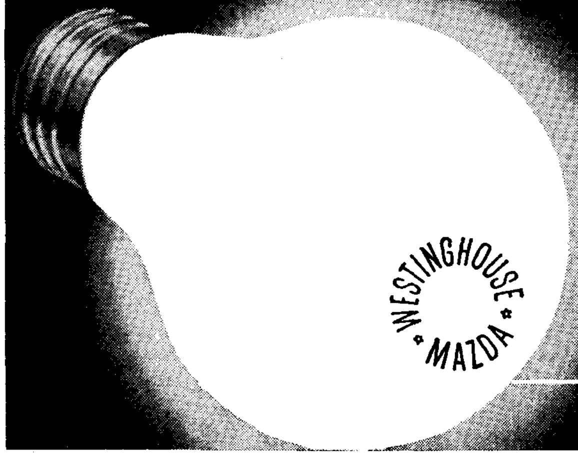

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Kentucky Doctor

Continued from page 22

stayed wherever nightfall caught him, usually sharing a dirt-floored shack with a curious and hostile family and hordes of vermin.

Children came to these needle parties with orders from their parents not to submit to vaccination, because it was widely believed that the doctor was trying to kill every child in the county. One boy said, “My pappy will shoot you if you vaccinate me.” So Doctor Wehr took a hypodermic syringe and a revolver, and had a little talk with the father. After he had shown the old man what real shooting was, the vaccination was performed without interference.

A year or so after the health program got under way, a survey showed that many of the children had internal parasites because of unsanitary living conditions. So Doctor Wehr took a crew of WPA workers into the hills and set them to work building privies. Not many of the mountaineers had ever seen such structures, but they were greatly impressed. “Mighty good-lookin' little cabins,” said one man.

And when Doctor Wehr toured the district a year later he found that most of them had been transformed into chicken coops, corncribs and tool sheds. They were reconverted only when he threatened to send everybody to jail.

In two years, Doctor Wehr had Elliott County headed in the right direction, so he was transferred to Paintsville, in Johnson County, a coal-mining district. From there, after establishing a system of health inspection, he went into Carroll County, with headquarters in Carrollton. There he established the first tricounty health department in Kentucky, a pattern which is now used throughout the state and has proved enormously successful.

Everywhere he went, there was trouble about vaccination. At one school a frightened boy dived through a window and nearly killed himself.

At another a self-ordained evangelist appeared with his little girl and began quoting the Bible to prove that vaccination was sinful. Doctor Wehr gave him back quote for quote, until finally the mountain man gave up and said, “Brother, you know more Scripture than I do. Vaccinate the child.”

In 1940, in recognition of his achievements in public-health work, Doctor Wehr was given a fellowship in the School of Hygiene and Public Health at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. He spent a year there and received his degree of M.P.H., then returned to his home county, Campbell, to head a reenergized health program.

He found the county fairly swarming with prostitutes who had been driven from the city of Newport by the local authorities. He attacked this problem with characteristic thoroughness. He had every madame in the county brought into his office, where he ordered her to close up shop or go to jail. Then he summoned the owners of property which was being used by prostitutes, and called their attention to the Kentucky law which held them equally responsible with the madame.

The Cleanup is Thorough

Four months after the cleanup began, a medical officer at Fort Thomas, an induction center for the Fifth Service Command, said there was not enough venereal disease in Campbell County to justify the expense of establishing a prophylactic station.

Doctor Wehr has been in a dozen Kentucky counties, organizing health departments, getting programs of public health under way, and establishing the pattern of the tricounty setup.

He believes that there is great need for county health work everywhere in the United States, and that other states couldn't do better than use Kentucky's system of organization. For he insists that his native state now has the best methods of combating communicable diseases.

“And I might add,” he says, “that we have the fastest horses, the greenest grass, the most beautiful women, and the most poignant memories of bourbon whisky.”

The End

I Soloed in 76 Minutes

Continued from page 24

“Only one?”

“What do you mean—‘Only one’? It's adequate. You don't want one of these overpowered jobs that'll snap your neck every time they take off, do you?”

“No,” I said. “No, I wouldn't like that.”

“Okay, so let's solo,” said Miss Mayo.

I quickly climbed up to the top of the corral fence and they led Buster up. He was several feet away. I tried to reach him with one arm and one leg, while hanging onto the fence with the others. After some experimenting, I learned this was the wrong way to get on a horse.

After that, we all went out into the corral and sat down and had a conference. Miss Mayo sat on Buster on account of her new pants. She then explained to me what I should do, and to Buster what he should do. I said I had a slight qualm.

“It is probably nothing,” said Miss Mayo. “Just the qualm before the storm.”

With the Greatest of Ease

This turned out to be true. I looked at my watch: 8:47 A.M. It was only a few minutes later that I was zooming off into the blue aboard the pinto, singing The Strawberry Roan.

There was a faint roaring noise, and through a cloud of dust I saw, far below me, the crash wagon racing like a mad thing toward the corral gate.

The next thing I knew Mr. Montana was saying loudly and indignantly, “He pulled leather!”

“He did not so,” cried Miss Mayo.

“I did so, too, and I'm proud of it,” I said. “I pulled everything in sight: gas feed, choke, ailerons, tail assembly, emergency brake. . . . Say, that emergency brake needs fixing.”

As soon as my chiropractor and the nurses had done their work, I got back into the cockpit—called a “saddle” in horse language—and took off again. It was much simpler than flying. No throttle to worry about. No gas gauge. No need to estimate speed or altitude. You just left it up to Buster. You gave him a slight kick in the fuselage once in a while. You nudged him with one knee, and he did a left bank; with the other knee, and he did a right bank. You patted him on the neck, and he gained altitude.

We went around and around the corral.

“Look, look!” cried Miss Mayo. “He's soloing!”

I looked at my watch. It was 10:03 A.M. (same day). I had soloed in 76 minutes.

“After the war, when they start producing civilian horses again, I'm going to buy one,” I told Mr. Montana.

“Swell!” he said. “Of course, there's a lot of secret horse stuff they can't release now, that'll make it even easier. Things called ‘reins.’ Make steering easier. Thing called a ‘bit’—it goes in the horse's mouth—gives you better control. You're making no mistake, Brother!”

So we all drove home again across the San Fernando Valley through the herds of whitefaces and the git-tar playing cowhands riding in to make the valley their home.

All in all, it was a fine experience for me and I have only one regret today: It is kind of hard to keep the typewriter on the mantelpiece.

The End

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Twelve-Hour Pass

Continued from page 18

smile and zinged off a sale on the register. The customer moved on while Martin took two steps forward and grinned down at her. "Hi," he said softly. She hated to be kissed in the store.

"Hi, Mart." Her smile turned wide and real, and already she was wriggling out of her white wrap-around. "Gee, Mart, you're thin, aren't you? Wish I had a tan like that."

He had to speak to his sister-in-law and answer questions, then he had to say hello to all the brothers and uncles in Meat and Dairy and Vegetables. He made it fast and smooth and automatic so he could keep his mind on Cassie and keep himself braced and steady and easy all at once, because it was the only way. With Cassie you had to be thinking all the time.

Then they were in the street, making for the bus stop and acting as if it were routine and they'd just left work together, only it was noon on Saturday instead of night.

Cassie broke a three-minute silence to ask when he had to leave, and he told her midnight, and he'd get a ride from Crescent Heights. Then they could find nothing else to say, and he wondered why it always had to be this way—cold like they were strangers on a blind date and didn't much go for each other.

HE FLAGGED a cab, and Cassie looked astonished. "Gee, Mart, it's only five minutes on the bus."

"After you wait thirty-five." He climbed in after her. "Cassie—Cassie. Gee, honey." That was another thing, the way the words stuck at first.

"What, Mart?"

He shook his head, and took one of her hands. It was big and strong like her face, and pink and soft at the same time. He raised it and held the warm soft fingers under his jaw. Then the hand came to life, patted his cheek, and withdrew again, the way Cassie herself could withdraw, did withdraw a lot of the time. The back of his skull pounded again. He told himself not to be a fool.

The cab stopped and they got out and Martin paid the driver. When he turned, Cassie was already halfway to the house. He stood there a second wetting his lips, then he walked slowly after her.

The place was on Sunset, but above and back from the street in a jumble of funny shaped houses built around a small patio which Cassie had fixed up with deck chairs and straw mats and potted geraniums. They went in by the back door, then three steps down to the kitchen he'd painted yellow because it was low and dark. Then up three steps, and there was the living room with the studio couch and the corner view and big chairs and lamps and charcoal drawings made by Cassie herself—and everything was in a design.

Everything was part of a pattern, like the red roses in the white jar beside a red ash tray with a white figurine on the other side. Like the green and yellow plants in the window boxes just outside the green and yellow curtains across from the green and yellow cover on the couch. Like the books. In low modern cases one row slanted left, the next row slanted right, the next left. Everything around Cassie always came in designs.

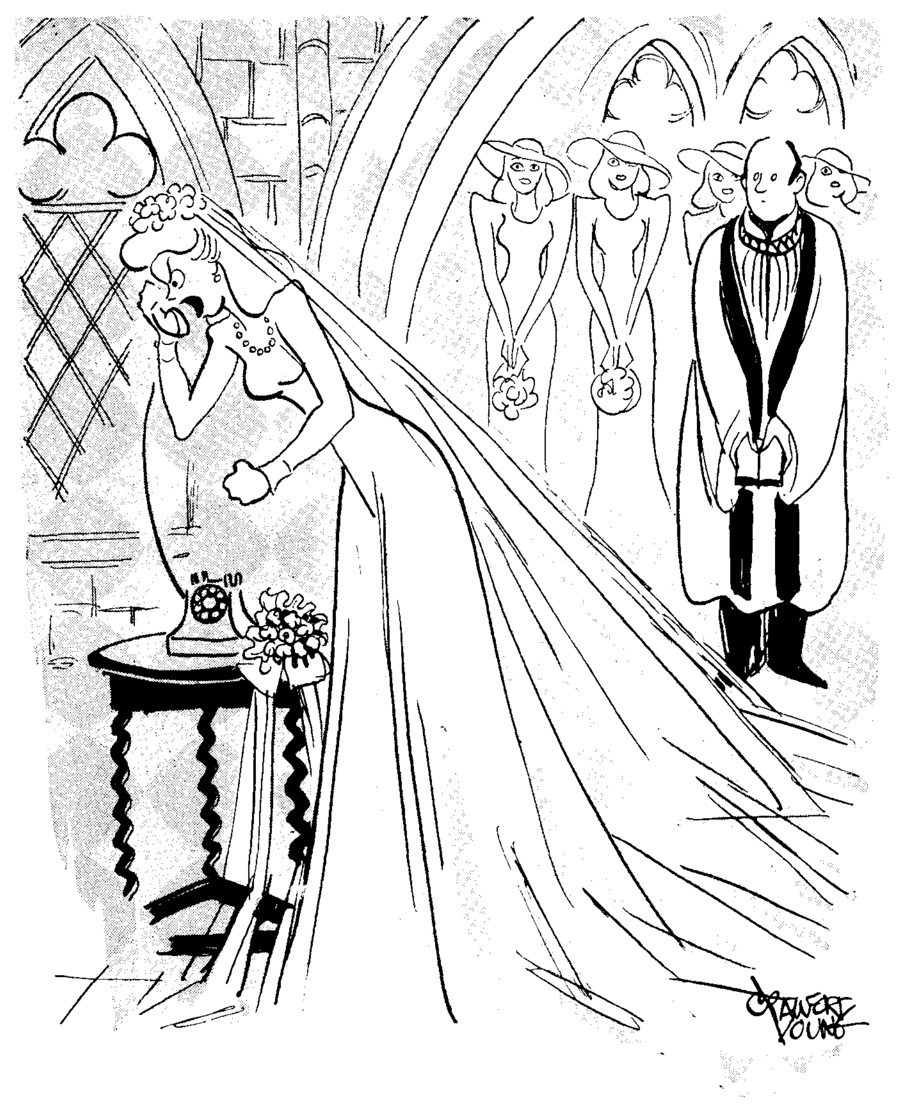
"What's the matter, Mart, you look funny?"

He laughed suddenly. "You don't know what it means after barracks. It's so pretty. It should be on a postcard, or in one of those fancy magazines."

He looked down at her and added huskily: "So should you."

"Aah." She took his bag into the bedroom, retreating before he could say any more. Every month the same thing. Every time. He scowled suddenly and strode after her to the closet where she was hanging up his cap. "Cassie—"

She turned and he put his arms around her clumsily and too fast, too greedily; but she didn't protest. She just let him hold her hard and mash his mouth against hers. She must have heard the pounding in his chest fit to knock his ribs out, she must have heard him breathing too hard, and felt the way he was shaking. It wasn't going on in her,



COLLIER'S "What do you mean—*what* wedding?" CRAWFORD YOUNG

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though, and he was a fool—he ought to cut his throat.

"There, there," she murmured, and for the first time he felt her arm lightly around him. "Poor Marty, you're all upset."

His mind went black with cursing. What the hell did he think he was doing, anyway? But his mind wasn't in control.

"All right," he said thickly. "Try living on the desert six weeks and see what you do when you get home."

"I love the desert. Boy, leave me on the desert and you couldn't get me home! Look, why don't you get out of that uniform and be comfortable?" She pulled out an old pair of slacks and a sweater for him.

He took a deep breath and tried to listen to the small, thin voice inside him endeavoring to make itself heard above the din at the back of his head: This is for Cassie, let her waste it if she wants; it's hers, isn't it? There's always time, no matter what they say. There's always time.

He made himself ask: "You don't want to go to the beach?"

Cassie shook her head. "Not unless you do. We could go for a walk later, if you want. Let's just stay here for a while."

He felt better then, and even took time for a bath in the immaculate tub, feeling grateful that he didn't have to go to the beach. Maybe they should go again, though, sometime when everything was all right for a change. Then he would be able to stop thinking of the beach with so much sadness and loathing.

IT HAD happened the last time they went—about a year ago when he had a two-day pass and they spent all Sunday at Santa Monica and Cassie tried to tell him that the world needn't fall to pieces if she fell in love with somebody else.

"Maybe you will first," she said, close beside him on the sand. "Gee, Marty, you're likely to before me. All I see is 4-Fs and old men at the store. You got Saturday-night hops."

"I don't go to the damned hops!" he yelled so loud that other people looked up, and Cassie was sore at him.

"Stop shouting," she said furiously. "Nobody's stopping you going to hops. Why shouldn't you go? All the time you write how lonesome the desert is, so you stay away from hops like a dope. I don't care if you go. You should go. I'm just telling you it's no crime if you fall for someone else."

"Listen," he said, beside himself, "we aren't talking about me, we're talking about you. Who's falling? Who brought it up? Listen, Cassie, who is the guy?"

Maybe there was no guy. Or maybe there was, just in the back of her mind, somebody she knew who hung around the store and even took her out. Maybe that's what gave her the idea. Or maybe there was no one even in the back of her mind; she just wanted to find out about him. He never knew. He only knew she was the one who brought it up and then waited with her eyes bright and her color high until he made himself pretend to agree that nothing terrible would happen if she fell in love with some other guy. He made it on one condition.

"You tell me if it happens, Cassie."

"Sure," she said casually. "I'll tell you."

She was the only person in the world who could make him feel alone.

MARTIN splashed the bath water around so there wouldn't be a ring; then he heard Cassie call: "Mart, are you going to spend your whole pass in the tub?"

"Hell, no!"

He climbed out, and picked the big towel from the middle of an arrangement of two big and two little towels and marveled absently at the grouping of bottles and jars on the glass shelf above the basin.

Martin smiled. Cassie made everything pretty, everything nice, everything special, somehow. She touched things and they began to take on a glow, to become somehow the best of their kind. It was the way she took so much trouble over everything, was it dishing potato salad in the store and making it fancy with parsley and pimento, or having her best bath towels out for him, or just getting herself dressed. Every hair had to be in place, everything had to match or harmonize before she'd go on the street.

Martin toweled himself and whistled "Far Away and Long Ago," and forgave her for not falling smack into his arms first thing and himself for being greedy. He'd begin all over again, take it slow and easy and hunt hard for the words. Any woman had to have the words, and Cassie had no sense of time. What if she squandered it while he made her feel good with words? That was what he came home for, wasn't it! It was what he should have come home for; time he thought of Cassie instead of his damned hungry self.

He combed his hair, thrust his legs into the slacks, made everything neat behind him, and opened the door. "Hey!"

"Out here," she called from the patio, and he bit off a sigh and joined her at the carefully placed deck chairs in the sun. He upset the arrangement by pulling his as close to hers as it would go, sat on the foot rest and faced her. She was in a gay play suit that set off her eyes and her crimson mouth and her olive skin, and the effect was pretty dazzling. He drew a short, hard breath. "Gosh, what a girl," he said reverently. "What a dream of a girl."

"Oh," she said. "Come on, tell me the news."

"Tell me yours first?"

"Haven't got a bit, Mart, honest. Nothing ever happens."

He looked at her sharply, saw her eyes with that brooding, far-off gaze he dreaded, saw the listless droop to her mouth; and he knew that Cassie was working into something really fancy in the way of moods.

He said swiftly: "Oh, I got a lot of news! I forgot to write you what happened after that corporal insulted the major's wife—" He dug in his heels and made something of it. Then he told another; then, frantically, another, trying for a laugh, and he did get one or two but her heart wasn't in it, and finally he gave up and asked if anything was the matter, did she feel sick, or what?

"I feel okay, Mart." She gave him an odd, almost pleading look, but he didn't know what to make of it. He didn't want to go on asking because Cassie was funny—if you suggested that maybe she had a headache or was tired, she'd get a headache or be tired right away.

"The sun's too hot," he said restlessly. "What do you say we go in?"

"All right."

HE WAITED for her to go first and tried to keep the talk going. "Glad you didn't want to go to the beach today; that ride would have been rugged."

"Yes. I bet you'd like a beer right now." Without waiting for his fervent thanks, she opened the icebox and got out a bottle, and he saw it was crammed with bottles, although she didn't care for beer. Then she got out his favorite lunch—cold chicken and fruit salad—and made a pretty tray which he carried into the living room. He ate a little, but he wasn't very hungry.

"Cassie—" His arms ached from wanting to hold her, but he knew it was no good touching her now; she had that look.

"I know, Mart," Cassie said unexpectedly. He could see the strained lines around her mouth. "You get home so seldom, the least I could do—I know. I can't help it, Mart. I don't want it to be that way, like we're strangers."

"All right," he said reasonably. "We don't have to be. We can talk."

The trouble was they couldn't talk. They couldn't find the words. He never could until he got the touch. It took Cassie's arms around him to shake them loose from the bottom of his mind and bring them up in silver gushes that didn't seem to come from him at all, but were sort of like music, like the night wind over the desert, and soft and shiny like the desert stars—or like Cassie's eyes when she wanted him close to her.

Cassie never found the words at all, not for how she felt. She could talk plenty about other things: customers at the store, a radio program, the elections, a good show, something she was making for the house. Rarely could she talk about herself.

Lying on the studio couch, with awnings making the room dim and cool, and light

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showing green through the window-box plants, Cassie talked of all the other things, but not about herself or him.

Martin sat opposite her with his feet on the end of the couch, while he drank his beer and wondered what she was cooking up and when it would break and what he ought to do. And the hours came and went away.

She was telling about a benefit she'd gone to in the Hollywood Bowl, and his mind slipped back to the first time he had taken her there to a concert, with night and stars above the lighted shell, the hills solid and brooding behind them, and the music coming to them from far below.

IT WAS when the army doctors were still rejecting him, so it mattered a lot more when Cassie told him during intermission that she wanted to get out of the store and take a traveling job that had been offered her.

"I want to see this country," she explained. "Gee, Mart, I've wanted to travel all my life, and this way I'd get to see so many places."

"And you'd be home when?"

"Every four months for three days. Think of me sleeping on trains and going to hotels and meeting people. Wouldn't it be wonderful, Mart?"

"Sure," he said.

Maybe he should have done something then. He caught how she was watching him, and how her eyes were too bright and her color too high, and he thought of her first husband, Joe Reeves, and he thought of her father, and he didn't do anything at all.

"What's the matter, Mart?" she asked. "You aren't mad because I want to travel, are you? I only thought what fun it would be." Still watching and waiting, while he got a sick memory of Joe Reeves roaring drunk and storming into the store to knock her half out of the Wrapping box because she was laughing with the new clerk.

He sat down then and asked Cassie to tell him something. "You told me once your old man gave you a black eye, Cassie. Why did he?"

She was offhanded. "He was sore because I was late, or something. I forget why."

She forgot why. There must have been so many times he hit her she forgot why. Then after her father—Joe Reeves.

Martin told her: "Listen, Cassie, you take that job traveling if you want. I'll make out."

"Okay," she said indifferently. But three weeks later, during which he lost his appetite and didn't sleep much and asked her nothing, Cassie told him she'd let the job go. She thought maybe it wasn't a good idea and said she'd told the manager so the morning after the concert in the Bowl.

He tried not to think of those three weeks, and told himself that if he took a beating it was his own damned fault, not hers. . . .

Lying on the couch with a green pillow under her head, Cassie asked: "Martin, would you pour me a small glass of beer?" After a second she added: "There's something I want to talk about. I hope you won't get sore."

He thought, Oh, good Lord. He thought, This is it. He went out and got the beer and brought it in, but before he gave it to her he bent down beside the couch, slipped an arm under her neck and lowered his head toward the one kiss he felt was his due. At the last second she turned her head away, and he jumped up saying: "Damn it, do you have to cringe?"

Then he saw tears well up in her eyes, and he picked up her beer. "All right, all right. Here—" He stared at her as she raised herself and took a swallow. Then he offered her a cigarette and lighted it for her, and in the blue smoke he saw another room—a smoky, blue room in a cellar restaurant in Olvera Street, dim and cool like this, and nearly deserted on a summer afternoon. . . .

It was soon after that they had married and things weren't going so well between them. He could hardly ever get close to her at all in those days, and Cassie tried to tell him why, that summer afternoon.

"You're too good to me, Mart," she'd begun, and he thought there was a pitiful look about that strong mouth of hers. Then she gave it to him with both barrels: "You don't make me feel like I ought to feel about you, Mart. You're sweet and generous and kind —you're an angel to me, Mart—but you touch me and I don't feel anything. It don't ring bells. It leaves me cold." Then she added pathetically: "I try to pretend, but I don't fool you. It's too tough on you, Mart. I think you should leave me."

LIKE the tune that ran through his mind, it was far away and long ago, and some of the hurt and the horror had dimmed, but he never again felt toward Cassie the way he had felt before she said those words. Probably he cared more about her now, but it was in a different way, a little older, a little wiser, not quite as exuberant and fresh.

Cassie had told him at that time: "You ought to think more about yourself, Mart. You think too much about me." And now he knew she was asking for it. Just begging for the back of his hand, the black eye. Trapped in a design of violence and brutality, she watched him with her eyes too bright and her color too high, all of it dimming to disappointment and indifference when he said: "If you want to leave, you leave. I won't."

Then they went home and she tried again: "You're too good to be stuck with me, Mart. I'll just break your heart like I break my own heart."

"You don't have to be that way."

"You let me be that way!"

It was a miracle he didn't give it to her then. She needed it, practically begged for it, and his hands twitched to give her the beating of her life—so what was the matter with him?

He tried to tell her how it was:

"You got to figure things for yourself, Cassie. A guy can't keep taking dope and pretend there's nothing to figure. That way you just need more and more dope, and it all catches up with you some day."

THE blue smoke from Cassie's cigarette drifted out through the darkening green light at the window boxes as she took another small swallow of beer, made a face, and set the glass on the floor beside her.

Martin waited while something in him stirred and seemed to sigh. "What do you want to tell me, Cassie? I suppose it's bad."

"It's not bad. It's just for now, just till the war is over and you're home all the time. This way once a month, once in two months, a few hours' pass. It's like I got a bomb hanging over me that's got to fall sometime this month, anyway next. I get so nervous waiting for the bomb to fall."

He crashed his feet to the floor. "Thanks very much! A nice way you put it. Hell, all over this country the women who'd give their eyes for a guy to get home once a year!"

"Sure, I know, Mart. It's rotten. I know." Her eyes pleaded with him. "It's not like you're fighting, though—selling in the Post Exchange—and thank God for that, but it makes it different, knowing you're safe."

He said bitterly: "If you don't think I'd give my right arm to fly, to get on a beachhead with a gun—"

"I know how you feel, but Mart, that's not the point. It's just this lousy one-day, two-day pass, and trying to get everything in. Like the bomb coming and I get cold inside, and everything goes to pieces. Two years now, Mart. You never had a happy pass. And it's my fault."

For a second it came to him with wonder that she was right: he'd never had a happy pass. In two years not one happy pass. He stared at Cassie, trying to take it in, to believe that without Cassie all his passes might have been happy ones. Olvera Street, the beach, the Bowl, and all the other places they had been might have seemed like much better places. Without Cassie—?

Martin shook his head. "What the hell—happy? You get a minute now and then and you're lucky. All the passes had those. Some of them had hours of it. That's the part I remember."

"Do you, Mart? Did you really have some?"

"Sure," he said, and it wasn't a lie. "You know I did." Then he remembered what she'd been talking about, and the back of his head began to throb. "Listen, Cassie, what were you trying to tell me about the bomb?" Some madness made him add: "What do you want me to do—not come home?"

SHE stopped looking at him and his heart turned over, and he wondered if this was going to be the pay-off.

"You got to come home, Mart. Don't be a dope."

He relaxed for a second, then he heard her say: "Mart, what we can do is when you come home I'll stay over at my father's place."

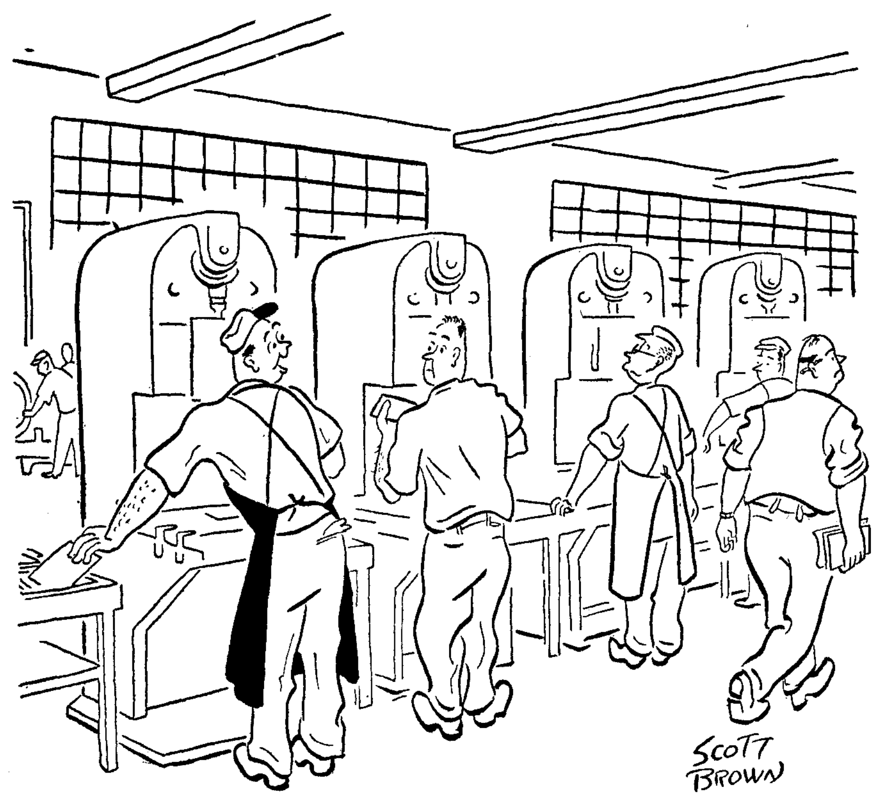
Seeing his expression she hurried on: "Don't look like I'm holding a gun on you, Mart. It's only till the war is over. It's only so I don't have to get used to your not being here all over again every time, every pass. Mart, you don't know."

"Don't know what?" he asked harshly. "For Pete's sake, do you think it's easy for me?"

"You got your Army life to go back to, your job, the other fellows. I'm here alone."

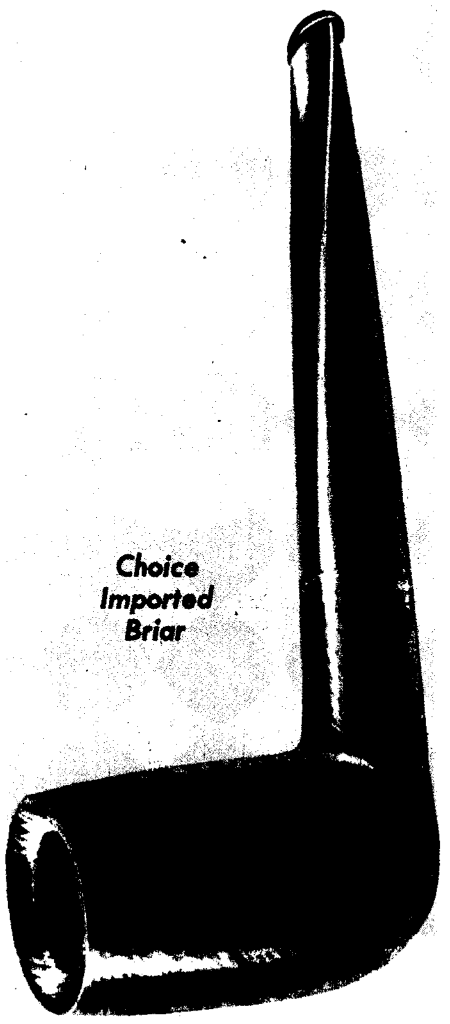
"That's not what you mean!"

He saw her raise a pink, soft hand wearily to her eyes. "You want so much," she whis-



"I won eight bucks in our car pool's pool. I held the ticket on the right front tire of Bill's car and it blew out this morning"

COLLIER'S SCOTT BROWN



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pered. "You come so wrought up. It's like a big storm, like the bomb—"

Santa Monica, Olvera Street, the Bowl. After three years still wanting the back of his hand, the black eye, the lash. A cold fear began in his chest and spread, because he knew now that Cassie would go on wanting the lash, and he couldn't give it to her. No matter how much he wanted to, he couldn't even try.

The Western dusk hovered briefly in the room and deepened into night; and Martin absently turned on the lamp beside him and saw Cassie watching him with her eyes too light and too bright and her color too high.

HE THOUGHT of the sea and the sand, of starlight over the Bowl, of a smoky blue room in Olvera Street. He thought of all the passes in two years, with the cuts coming deeper and the words getting worse; and he wondered why he didn't mind so much any more.

With less effort than usual he was able to say indifferently: "You stay at your father's if you want to, Cassie. You do whatever you want to do." Then he lay back quietly in his chair.

Cassie raised her head a little and he saw her looking at him with sudden, unexpected sharpness.

"Don't you really care, Mart?" she wanted to know.

He told her simply: "I don't give a damn." Then he saw her face begin to change, her eyes growing dark and tender, her mouth curving sweetly to a smile.

"You're too good to me, Mart," she told him softly. "You ought to slap me down, you ought to pin my ears back when I get this way, but you know it doesn't mean a thing. Mart, honey, you know how I feel, don't you? Why don't you turn off that light and come over here?"

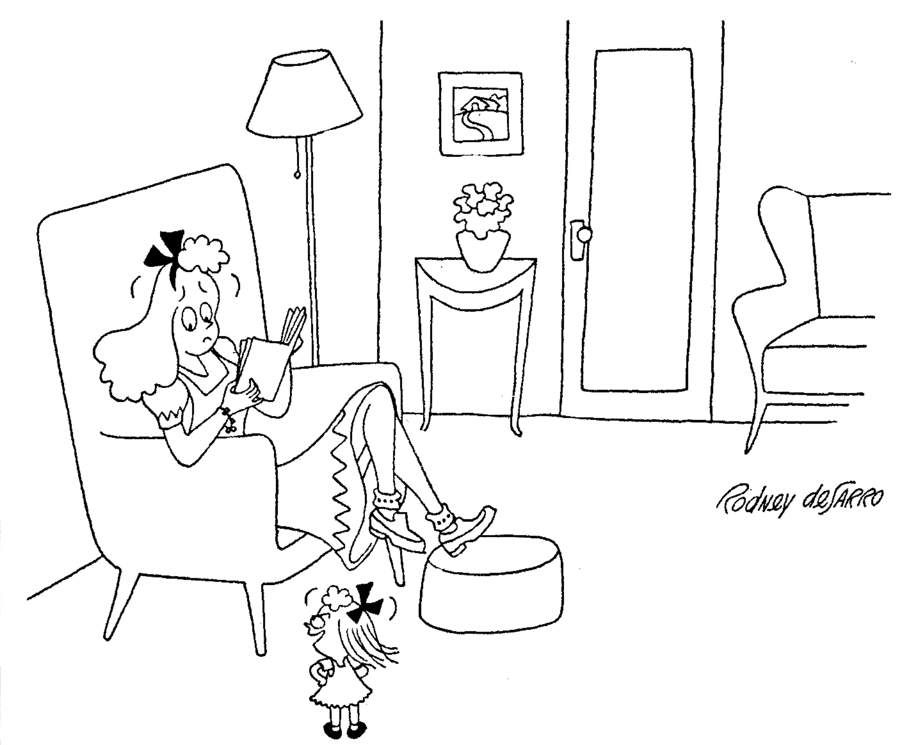
He stared incredulously for a second before he turned off the lamp, and then in the darkness the gleam of his own comprehension nearly dazzled him. Violence was what she had to have; it set the pattern of her emotions. But violence need not be the back of his hand, a blackened eye; indifference could be an even sharper blow.

If he could be indifferent. If he could control the pounding in his chest, steady his voice, stop the trembling of his hand reaching out to her. If he could simulate coldness, play hard to get, then he could have her.

A sadness came up in him as he groped toward her arms, but he swallowed quickly and made the words come hard and cold:

"Anything you say, Cassie."

THE END



COLLIER'S "You going to divide the forty cents an hour for watching me or do you really want to earn it?" RODNEY DE SARRO

Any Week

Continued from page 4

our new wastebasket, we glance over our assortment of German internment camp photos—Buchenwald, Belsen and Dachau for instance. And while we're thus keeping our memory aflame, several more letters are laid on our desk. We shan't be surprised if a couple of them ask us to believe that at heart the Jap "people" are themselves decent, law-abiding and peace-loving creatures. Which reminds us to get out those pix of Americans just released from Nip internment camps. Be gentle with our fallen foe? Sure. Let's feed him, clothe him, shelter him. Above all, let's warm him. Excuse us while we stoke that incinerator.

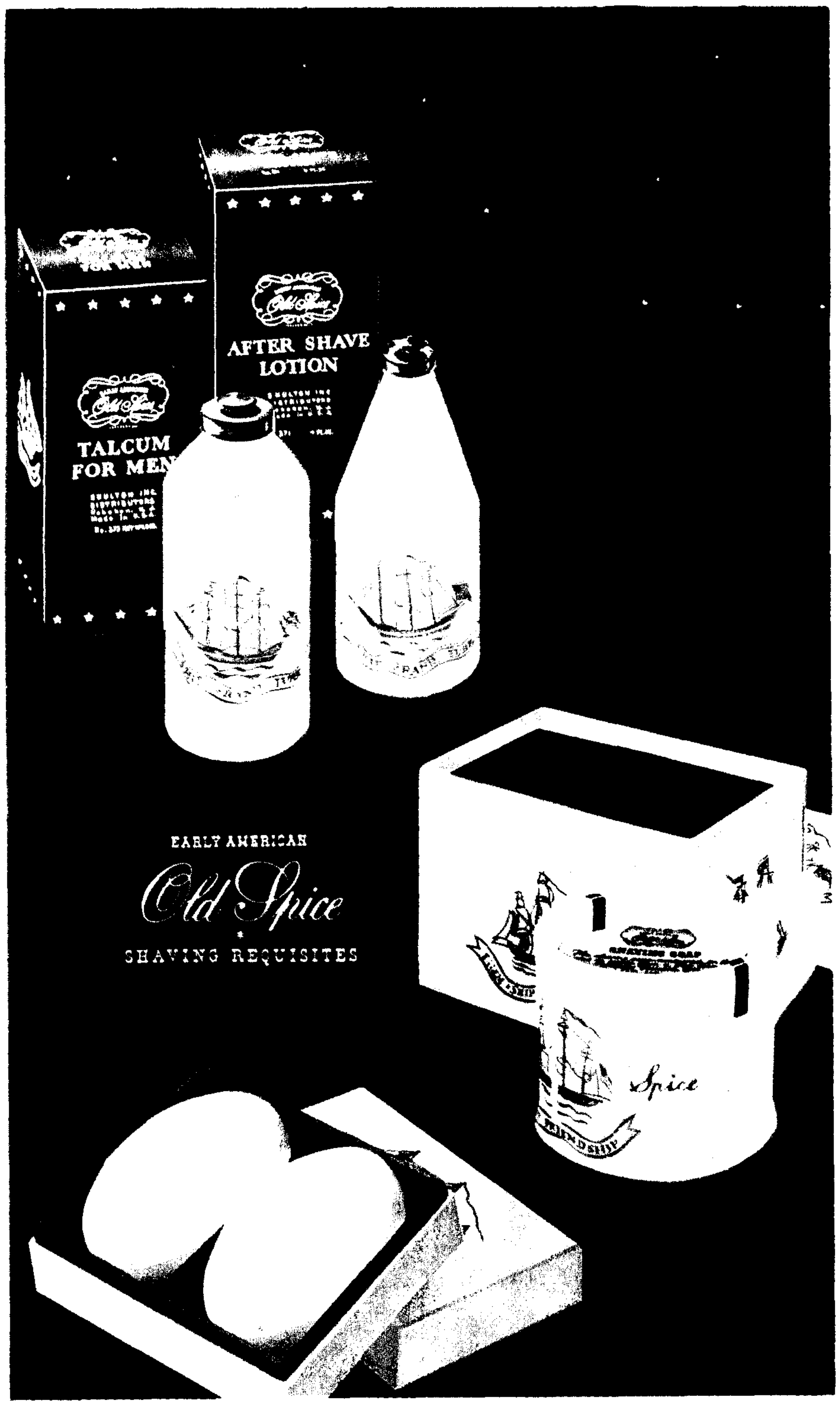
WE'VE just been calling on a major general, although that's not the important point. On his desk is a sign reading: "As a last resort, use common sense." He doesn't know whether he'll be able to keep the sign there long. Afraid somebody will report it as un-American.

THE war in Europe being over—the shooting war, we mean—a large number of our fellow citizens are wondering what we're going to do with Dwight Eisenhower. But Mr. Dave Colwyn isn't. From Trenton, New Jersey, Mr. Colwyn nominates the general for Secretary of State. "Then," says he, "we'll have a man who knows what's going on in the world and what to do about it." We've seen worse ideas than Mr. Colwyn's—even in this column.

"I WISH," a reader who wishes to remain "anomalous" writes, "that you would spend just one Saturday night in Tuttle." As far as we can make out, Tuttle is in Arkansas. On Saturday nights in Tuttle, "folks from all over walk up and down our main street hollering," reports our correspondent. "Maybe you can make out what they are hollering about. I can't make out whether they want out or are just plum pleased."

FROM the crew of an LST which was, at the time, barging around Mindanao Deep, we received word that they have issued an invitation to the Big Three to hold their next meeting on that craft for a "talk, smoke and spit." They complain that they've received no reply from Mr. Stettinius. Also a bit of advice from A Friend: "Don't make any predictions about the end of this Jap war. I just got to Guam, and things out here are going to change quite a lot or I'm not a seaman third class." . . . W. D.

A MATTER OF American Tradition



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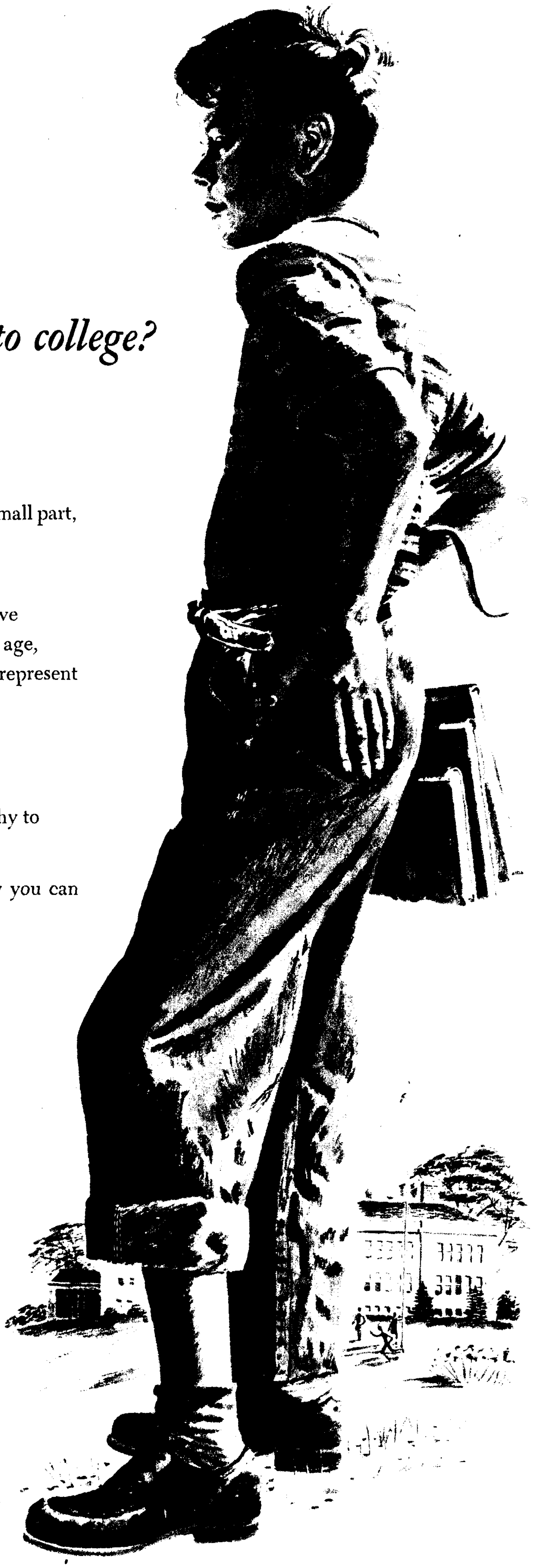

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Heaven LIKE A TENT

BY GRACE AMUNDSON

IT WAS still the ugliest dawn he could remember, bar none. Purple and soggy, rising greasily out of the Saskatchewan prairie, rolling back the leaden sky and promising nothing but the ceaseless sough of April wind through the wire grass. He watched the Great Northern grind eastward, scrawling an illegible pattern on the sky and releasing a melancholy yelp through the buttes.

For a moment he sagged against the entrance of the Glasgow station and took a deep breath. Then almost against his own hard will, he laughed softly. Home again. Up the muddy street against the Anaconda Hotel lounged a drunken Indian with a soft stomach and a proud Athabascan profile. The same damned Indian he had left on the same damned spot two years before! The thing that hit you hardest was the persistence of progress.

The air was streaked with the smell of coffee from the freight room. He popped his head inside. "Hi, Pascoe."

Pascoe turned swiftly inside his loose vest, and his eyes blinked beneath his green visor. "Who the— Oh, you, Ord. You back already?"

"Back already, Pascoe."

"Furlough?"

"For good this time, Pascoe."

A remnant of brusque anxiety crept into Pascoe's voice. "You been hurt, Ord?"

Ord flicked away his cigarette. "Nothing I can collect any sympathy for. An amoeba wandered into my colon."

Pascoe was only slightly baffled. "Just so you ain't been wounded. Goin' back to work for St. John?"

"Where else?"

Pascoe nodded toward the side entrance. "You car's over there beside the grain chute. Old St. John's had someone come over to tool her up for you every month. Looks like he's needin' you worse than ever now. Young St. John got killed off to the Pacific, y'know."

Ord's hazel eyes narrowed reflectively. "St. John wrote me."

"Not that young Chris ever did a lick," Pascoe commented. "It's no dead secret you kept that ranch on a profit ever since Fletcher St. John took you in as a kid. The trouble with the St. Johns is that they was always too much the English gentlemen. Too much pride. About everything except their women—" Pascoe glinted around cautiously before uttering the last, as if indiscretion were worse than the truth.

ORD said nothing. When you had been pushed around as a youngster, you loved the worthless people because they were invariably kind, and when you grew up you protected them because they were so childishly helpless. Ord stood up, stretched the train cramp out of his long arms and rubbed the night from his eyes.

"Guess I'd better warm the bus up," he suggested.

"The going's bad upland," advised Pascoe. "Y'got sixty miles to go to the ranch. You'll be lucky to make six on the grease from here to Plentywood."

Ord grinned. "I've forgotten more mud in this war than you could remember staying up all night."

A few minutes later he was listening curiously to the throbbing old motor, trying to pick out any abnormality before swinging up to the plateau. He had backed out to the street when he heard the voice of Pascoe through a mist smelling sweetly of the prairie and acidly of the small life of Glasgow.

"Ord! Hold on, Ord!" Pascoe raced through the dawn, his vest flying. He gripped the door of the car like a drowning man and his eyeballs were the size of targets. "Listen

"You've got to listen to me, Silk," Daley pleaded. "He never betrayed you, not actually, because he never forgot you, really. If I tell you, can't you believe it?"

quick, Ord, before she comes. She says she's young Chris' widow—his widow, Ord! From Australia! I never heard nothing about her. She wants to get up to the ranch. What'll we do, Ord?" Pascoe whirled around dramatically and pointed across the street where a tall young woman with a coronet of brown braids and great dark eyes watched them anxiously.

In a second she stepped off the curb and headed decisively toward the car, swinging a kit bag as if it were a pocketbook. Her suit was worn and boxy on her slim figure, and her face, English-wise, was almost too long for true proportion, with incredibly delicate skin. But there was something luminous there, too, behind the tiredness and the slight bewilderment. She smiled reassuringly at Pascoe, then past him to Ord. "Hello there. Is it true you're going my direction?"

Ord shifted his gum seriously. "Which way's that?"

"Upland. The St. John ranch. He's my father-in-law. Perhaps you know him."

Ord swung the door open slowly, took the bag from her hand and slipped it over the back of the seat. "I work for him," he said.

She slid eagerly into the seat. "How lucky! Then you must have known my husband." She paused and stared down the scarred mud of Glasgow's street. "Chris, I mean."

"Grew up with him," said Ord.

She watched him curiously. "Then you must—yes, of course! How dull of me. You're Ord Bennett. Chris told me. My name's Daley. This is really all right." She folded her arms comfortably.

ORD reached past her and took the door from Pascoe's reluctant hand. Pascoe's mouth stood open as a bare shovel, and on the pale backwall of his prairie-tuned eyes, Ord read the mortified question: Has she heard about Silk Willowbunch, too?

Ord slammed the door, and his own eyes answered grimly: No, and she won't, from me or anyone else, unless some fool like yourself spouts off.

Pascoe understood and retreated. Ord steered skillfully through Glasgow to the plateau road, swerving to the left or right, as the car slid off in the heavy mud. They rode in silence for an hour, and Ord admired the way she relaxed, riding with the car instead of bucking it. "This gumbo make you nervous?" he asked finally.

"It's very familiar," she laughed. "We have mud like this on our lowlands in the spring."

"Is St. John expecting you?"

"I wired him from San Francisco when I landed. I heard about Chris mid-passage, you see, but it seemed wiser to come ahead anyway. I thought I might be of some comfort. I also telephoned back there in Glasgow." She lit a cigarette, gave it to Ord, and lit another one for herself. Between them there had already sprung up the quiet comradeship of those who must travel a way together. The wind tore savagely at the hood of the car and Ord's hand tightened on the wheel.

"Do you know what you're getting into? It's lonely up here."

She reached over and pushed the limp wiper over the misted windshield in front of him. "I grew up on my uncle's ranch in Gippsland, and I'll wager it was even lonelier. It all depends on the individual, I think. I mean he'll either go to seed or flourish by himself."

Ord thought of St. John's elegant, stretched-out legs and his hand caressing the bottle beside him. "A person can go to pot in some ways and still be good in others," he said defensively. And he wondered if she were prepared at all for what she would meet.

The strong must protect the weak, but sometimes it is necessary for a woman to teach a man that there is strength in weakness

She raised her eyebrows in quick agreement, and there was a sweet-sad pucker to her cheek. "Chris managed to come out of it all right. But then I don't need to tell you. You know how Chris loved life."

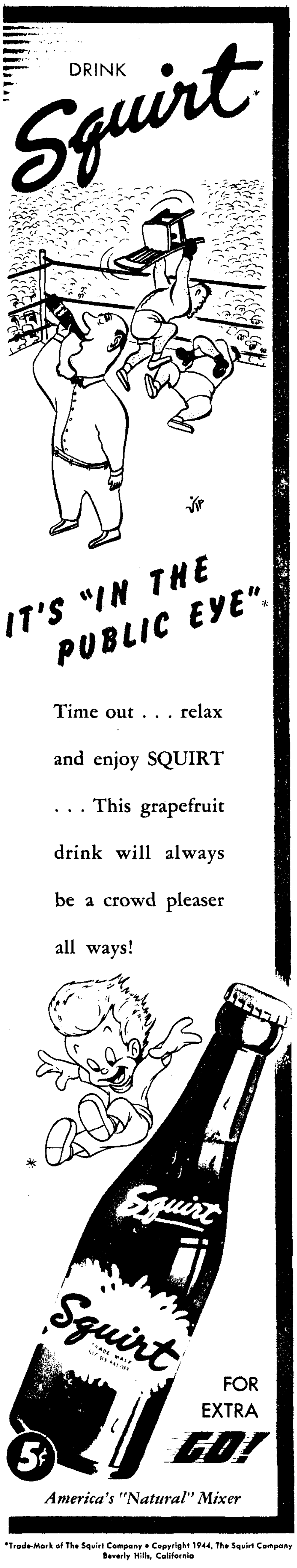
Ord remembered well how Chris loved life—a wild wahoo from horseback in the depth of the night, the puff of dust behind a speeding tire, the mad-eyed merriment of Silk Willowbunch and her half-breed anarchy. Ord sickened with the ordeal ahead. He had been protecting a St. John one way or another ever since he could remember—keeping old St. John acceptable in the eyes of men and young Chris respectable in the eyes of women. Even unto the grave. "How did you meet Chris anyway?" he asked.

"At Canberra—the races. Chris loved the races. We both loved horses." She brooded over the brown road ahead. Then she said, "I hope it won't be too hard without Chris at the ranch."

"We'll get by," said Ord quietly.

"Of course I want to help, too. That goes without saying. But Chris managed things with such ease, and I'm afraid I'll be slow and rather stupid. Still, it can't be too

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWIN DAWES



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different from home." She spoke slowly and softly.

"No place is different from anyplace else," Ord observed gruffly.

She peered at him sidewise. "It must be different. You came back."

"I came back because I wanted to get the hell away from people. There's too damned many of them in the world."

"Chris didn't think so."

Ord almost lashed out on that one; instead he jerked the car fiercely out of the sucking mud. Chris, Chris! Chris had never been lonely because he had no discrimination. Chris had plundered what he wanted and lied beautifully out of what he didn't want. Chris had never longed for the love of a fine person—and Chris had found it. About the only thing Chris could do honestly was to die, and he had done that handsomely.

They drove on for hours, going ahead about half again as much as they slipped back. They stopped at the Larson ranch for supper, and when they started out again, dusk lurked along the arroyos and soaked up the plateau. Ord remembered this was about the time of evening when St. John began hitting the bottle and remembering too well; it had nothing to do with Chris or immediate things. But tonight Ord was not worried. St. John would manage to stay erect and wry for his new daughter. As Pascoe had remarked, St. John was a gentleman, and from now on there would be a lady in the house to keep him at his best. The point was, for how long, oh Lord? And who would be the first to pour out the story of Silk Willowbunch?

The sedan lurched along into the black throat of the night. Daley threw a cardigan over her head and looped the sleeves about her neck. Ord could see she was graceful as a wind-streaked cloud—as sensitive and courteous as old St. John himself. The kind of woman who unconsciously kept alive a tradition of quality for men who lacked fiber. It made Ord stinging mad. You watched women all over the world, muscle-plump and vein-thin, and when you finally saw one who was good for the whole ride through life, with an intelligent serenity in her eyes and a soft pride in her touch, she belonged to Chris, who could have been contented with far less.

THEY had gone a half hour longer, the wind clawing at the windows.

"Look here," she asked, "shall I drive?"

Ord leaned forward on the wheel. "I'd better hang on till we're home."

"Do you mind if I have a spot of sleep then?" Ord shook his head. She braced herself warmly against his right shoulder, folded her legs beneath her, and slept.

Ord wondered what Chris had told her, how many stolen deeds he had recited glibly to her, what manner of man he had made of himself in her eyes. They were about a mile from the ranch when he heard her utter a faint sound, like the whimper of an animal in a storm. He drew the car to a slow stop, slipped his hand protectively under the back of her neck, and moved her head gently from his shoulder to the back of the seat. He was unbearably aware of the warmth of her breath and the clean smell of her skin; it was hardly that he had never dreamed of her, but rather that he had just discovered her. The irony of it hurt as much as the privation. Chris could hold Daley in bondage forever, because he had died quickly. Ord raised a hand irresistibly to the subtle outline of her cheek, then let it fall. Suddenly her eyes opened and stared foggily into his, and Ord felt his energy ebb. "You were dreaming," he said curtly, and turned back to the wheel.

She straightened up and laughed with calm good nature. "You grow accustomed to a little ordinary dreaming after a while." And then her voice lagged. "There are so many worse things."

When they drew up at the ranch, they found St. John sitting rigidly in a tufted leather chair beside a stained-glass lamp. His sandy brow was strained from watching an evening pass in normal dimensions for the first time in twenty years, though only Ord would have known it.

St. John was built on cavalier proportions, but his long arms and legs moved as if they were stitched to a brittle piece of glass. As he came forward to meet them, a flush spread from his thin nose across his concave cheek to the edge of his sandy hair. He had put on an old tweed jacket which sagged around the pockets, and he held out a well-bred hand to Daley.

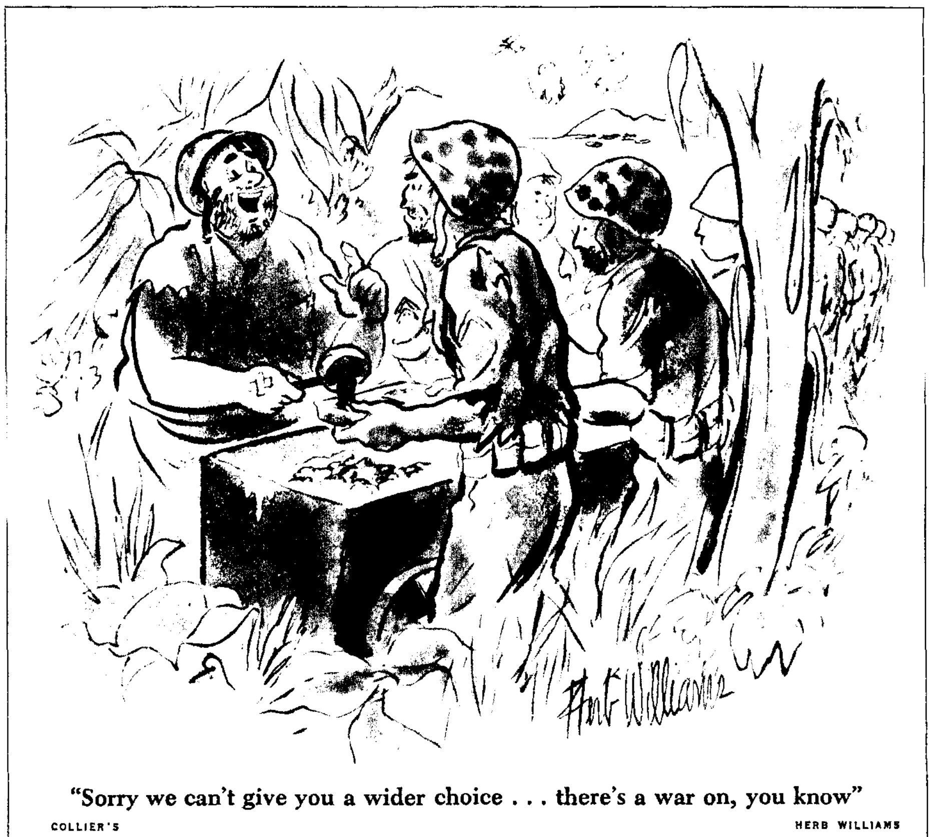
"I'm glad you've come to us, Daley," was all he said, but his gaze never left her face.

She smiled and put both her hands on his. "I can see now it was no mistake," she said. "But it's been a long trip, and I'm certain I'd make no sense at this hour. So do you mind if we wait till morning to talk?"

It was as simple as that. A meeting of thoroughbreds. St. John rang for the Chinese cook and had him take Daley's bag to her room. He watched her go with the vague eyes of a man recalling a forgotten world, and he said to Ord over his shoulder, "She'll be leaving us soon, Ord. She'll never stay in a place like this, and you can't blame her. But it will be nice having her, even for a while."

"She'll stay," Ord assured him. "She's the staying kind."

"Do you think so?" asked St. John wistfully. Then he turned abruptly and clapped Ord on the shoulder. "My governor, Ord! I nearly forgot—you're home again. Welcome home!"



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COLLIER'S HERB WILLIAMS

Ord grinned and sat astride the arm of the leather chair, looking into the fire. "How'd the lambing go this year?"

St. John mustered the technicalities out of the confusion of his mind. "The merinos thinned out a bit. The cheviots took it hard in the big snow. Eight thousand wethers in the east section now. God, Ord, but I'm glad you're back; I don't know sheep from goats about this place. A few more seasons of bad hands and hard snows and I'd hate to think about it."

Ord yawned; he had developed his yawn as a defense against many things, including sentimentality. "It'll snap back with a little handling."

St. John fumbled with his pipe. "Ord—I never thought I'd say this. I've no right as a father to say it. But if there had to be a choice between Chris and yourself—I'm glad it was you who came back."

Ord's forehead creased seriously. "Thanks."

St. John made a sardonic little bow. "I thank *you*, Ord, for coming back at all. I'd always intended to divide the ranch between Chris and you. You know that. I thought it only fair for you to have a part of what you've worked for. But Daley's coming has changed that whole situation. She's a woman, Ord—Chris's wife. Call it a kind of etiquette for widows, anything you damned please. But it's got to be all hers now. I can't see it any other way in case you think you're wasting your time."

Ord looked squarely at St. John. "You ought to remember I never asked for anything in my whole life. I take what comes."

St. John's blond lashes blinked in mild embarrassment. "Do you really think she'll stay?"

Ord glanced down the hall where they could hear Daley making pleasant conversation with the Chinese cook. "She's independent as a hog on ice," Ord observed. "She'll probably put up with anything except your walloping the bottle. That leaves it pretty much up to you."

ST. JOHN sat down slowly to figure out what he had to say; living so long in silence, expression came hard. "I'm not much good, am I, Ord? You don't have to tell me. I came out to Montana as a remittance man; you couldn't possibly remember that, but I do. I remember everything up to the moment I was cashiered. When you are turned out as I was, you set up a pattern of failure. One by one you begin to lose things—people, respect, and eventually the desire to win them back. I lost Chris too, because he had no example. But Daley doesn't know about any of that. She'll remember Chris from the day he died, and she'll judge us from this hour. You needn't worry; I'll manage myself. Ord, I—I think I want Chris's wife to admire us. I don't mean we have to lie. But does she need to hear everything?"

"How much is everything?" asked Ord studiously.

St. John's voice was a bare whisper: "Silk Willowbunch."

"That depends on Silk," said Ord impatiently. "What's she doing these days anyway?"

St. John lifted his hands helplessly. "I've never laid eyes on the girl. Chris wouldn't bring her home. But you hear just the same. Carl Larson says she's still working at the Buckhorn in Regina, and pawing the ground as usual."

"She's got the heart of a mountain cat all right," Ord commented.

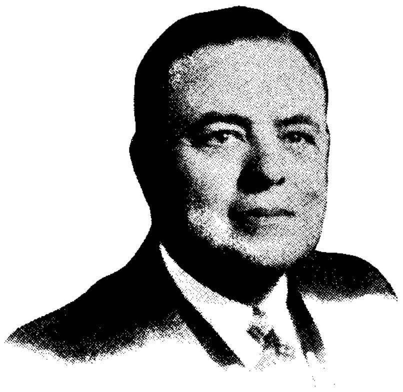
"They say since Chris died she'd just as soon spit in your eye. Carl Larson insists she's stark mad. She'll take any rancher's car at hand and tear around all night."

"A scared animal races itself to death sometimes," observed Ord.

"I wish it were so," said St. John bitterly. "She'd be better off. Nobody wants her permanently. Maybe Chris wanted her; they were sort of alike—lost and foolish. But she wanted Chris, no doubt about that, and she'll hate this marriage." St. John looked up; in the midst of his face which never tanned, his shy eyes were desperate. "Ord—you've got to stand by. We've got to keep Silk away

Shall We Educate Our Children

As Well As We Do Our Servicemen?



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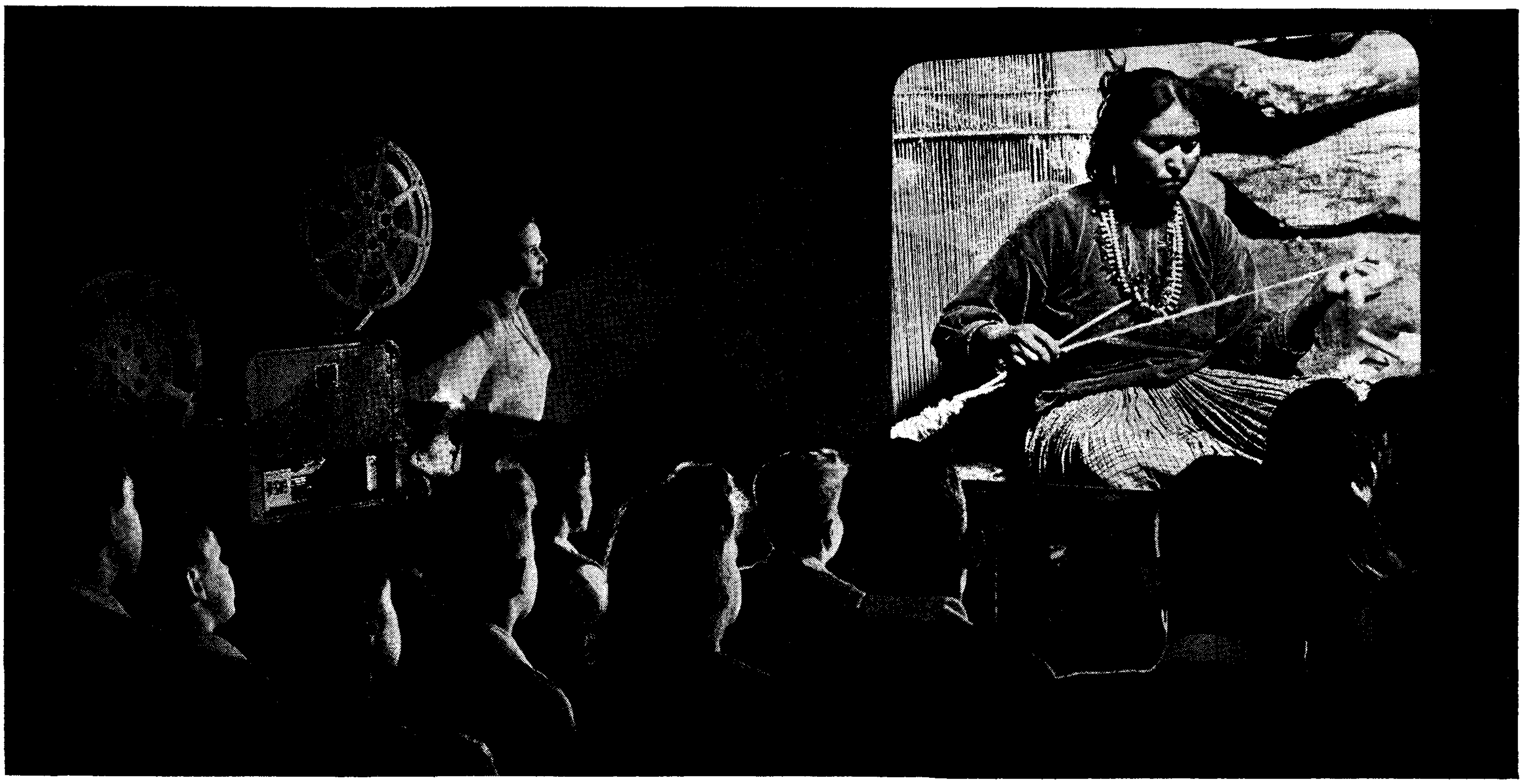

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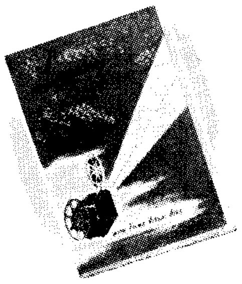

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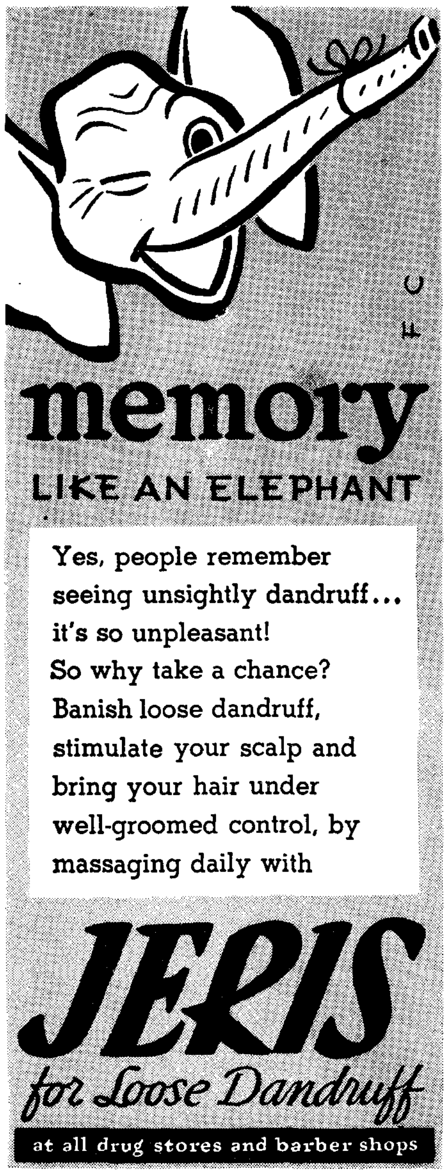

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from Daley. I want her to stay. I may not deserve good things, but I want her to stay."

Ord said "Sure" softly, and went on into the kitchen. It was, after all, the same old job, counting sheep and protecting St. John. Except that this time, Ord and St. John wanted the same thing.

APRIL sidled into May, and it went round the county that the Australian bride of Chris had come to wear out her widowhood with old St. John. At first everyone laughed; someone shrewder than Silk Willowbunch was *nicking* St. John, *they* said; the sins of the father and all that stuff. But you could have chewed on their silence when they actually saw Daley with St. John.

It was superb to behold the two of them, riding out to the East section in the morning, driving St. John's sleek car across the border in the afternoon, at the high-school basketball game on Saturday night, the movies in the auditorium on Sunday. They belonged together, her measured voice and his proud head. There was something gallant and right about them, and St. John responded as if he had never lost the way.

But more than that. Those who had been amused with old St. John through the years were suddenly awed that this had been the real St. John all the time and no one had discovered it until Daley. Good will cracked from their hearts like rampaging August weed, and it became a kind of public trust to keep faith with the new St. John. People who had never opened their mouths to him before respectfully said hello. But no one mentioned Silk Willowbunch or anything élse embarrassing about the St. Johns for that matter. How long could it last? And when the bubble broke, would old St. John snuggle against the bottle again, and would Daley stay in this alien land where the legend of Chris and Silk ran riot?

It was Ord who remained sturdy as a dory in a threatened tempest; with his slow manner alone, Ord created a rich brown world in which nothing was unanchored. And yet Ord was perhaps more aware of Daley than St. John—aware of the fragrance of her soap on the washstand, her humming down the hall, the good length of her leg from knee to ankle, the whiteness of her wrist as she turned the pages of a mail-order catalogue. It was hell, and the kind of hell in which Ord must discover soon whether it was Daley or merely the idea of Daley driving him mad.

THE middle of May had arrived before St. John came to Ord for help. Ord was in the gear shed, soaping a saddle. St. John sat down, patient as a friendly child. "Silk's angry, Ord, mad as a stung heifer about Chris having a wife all these months and never letting her know. Carl Larson says so."

Ord buffed the dried soap with his palm. "Chris is dead. Only an Indian would want revenge. Only a woman would care."

St. John's voice was low and discouraged: "It's worse than that. She's announced it around that she's driving down tonight to give Daley a piece of her mind and tell her what sort Chris really was. Ord, you've got to drive up to Regina and head her off. Send her away. Buy her off. Anything."

Ord leaned on the saddle calmly. "You can't patch a bad rig with paper. It's forever losing the road just the same."

St. John faded almost to transparency, and he stiffened against the hewn brace of the shed. "Forever be damned, lad! I'm living *minute by minute now*, and I'll sell my soul for a few extra seconds."

Ord's brows latched together, and he buffed slower.

St. John's voice held on with a thin clutch: "You don't understand, Ord, and I thought you would. We can't let Daley in for indignities like this. Maybe it's pride or selfishness in me. But what would she think?"

Ord suddenly let out a curse soft as a Chinook and flung the saddle along the floor of the shed. St. John jumped back like a startled lasso dancer and stared in amazement. "Maybe you need to know what someone thinks now and then!" Ord whipped out.

The silence between them twanged, and St. John knew instinctively that if this were not the end, it was close to the end of Ord's patience for him. This was the farewell of Ord the all-suffering, Ord the defender. But there was something else there too. St. John was puzzled, but only for a moment. And he knew as he walked slowly back to the weathered house where the years of his exile were marked off in scaling paint and bleached board, that this time he was alone. Ord was a man in love, so much in love he was almost swinging it around his head on a rope.

St. John leaned on the fence beside the shearing pen. For the first time in memory he faced the truth. He had lounged through life thinking he was a superior person who had got the bad breaks. Superior person! In the pale afternoon sun, St. John snorted and dropped his head into the trembling dampness of his hands. He reflected with a touch of yearning on the last month. He could have asked no more than to go on like that indefinitely, with Daley and Ord in the same house, evenings he could anticipate and days that were more than strung-out hours.

It was the hell of a situation, with Silk and himself standing uselessly in the middle. The unwanted who refused to be cast away, making an agony of Ord's love and a mockery of Daley's faith. St. John was ashamed and humiliated, yet afraid. *He had built his brief heaven like a tent, but the wind and the locusts and the reckoning were still outside, and he could not bear to face them. Not yet.* If he could postpone them for a while—if he could forget until he found the courage. Forget? He picked himself up from the fence slowly and made his dazed way toward the house.

ORD was still in the gear shed when Daley rushed out to fetch him several hours later. "Ord! Come help me, please—he's in his room. I think maybe—oh, I don't know. Just come."

Ord dashed ahead of her into the house and paused in the doorway of the room where St. John lay sprawled over the arm of a chair. He strode across the room and extracted the bottle wedged beneath St. John's shoulder. He examined its level, and then carefully heaving St. John over his shoulder, he laid him on the bed.

Daley watched, backed against the door. She laid her cheek against the frame and closed her eyes for a moment. "I'm sorry," she said. "I suppose I should have known, but it never occurred to me."

"Should have known what?" Ord snapped.

"They're such lovable men," she reflected without answering him. "But there's always something they can't resist. With Chris it was the races and perhaps other things if I'd had time to discover them. With him," she said, nodding toward St. John, "it's this. They depend on you, more and more until you discover it's too late to hurt them." She stared piteously at Ord. "But he seemed so happy, Ord. Why this?"

Ord wiped the back of his hand across his forehead and surveyed St. John's stillness. "He's been afraid for weeks."

"Afraid?"

Ord looked at her as if to measure her steadiness. "Are you?"

She searched hopefully for some response behind his frown. "I might be, except for you, Ord."

He walked toward her with no sense of reality and braced a hand on the door over her head. It crashed about her suddenly, and their kiss was built of banished loneliness and great passion. It was a starved kiss, and it broke reluctantly. He held her by the shoulders, and she reached up to do what she had wanted to do for weeks—trace the deep highways on his forehead.

"If there's something I should know, tell me," she insisted. "We can't leave him like this."

Ord glanced back at St. John. "He'll perk up by tonight. Just don't let him feel too rotten about it."

"Tell me," she pursued.

"It's Chris. There was a girl in Regina—a half-breed wasp named Silk."

She sank back against the door. "There were girls in Australia too. Before and after. Chris couldn't *help it*."

Ord gripped her shoulders more firmly and they understood a great deal together. "He was afraid you'd leave when you found

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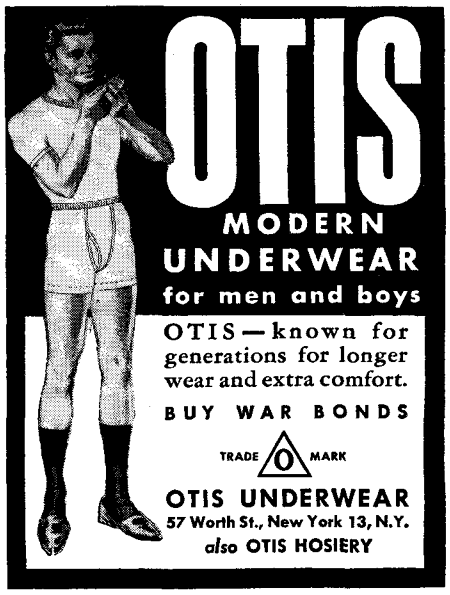

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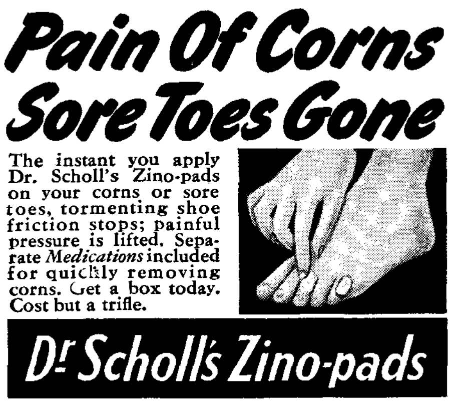

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out. Silk's a witch and you've made her lose face. The whole border's waiting for the fireworks."

Daley sighed.

"What now?" he asked softly, sheltering the madonna line of her cheek.

"I was thinking. If we start driving now, we can get back from Regina tonight."

THE town of Regina had rejected the May evening and was brooding sullenly on its own ugliness. Inside the jerry-built Buckhorn, the bar stood bare and scrubbed, and the only light in the room spread in a sallow shaft from a room to the rear, where the slap of cards cut through a mawkish juke-box ballad bleating out the futility of love.

Ord led Daley to a table at the edge of the patch of light and they sat quietly, watching the red beacon on the juke-box shine like a fire on a distant hill. Ord reached for her hand; it was cool and resolute. She had preferred to come to Silk herself, and she knew what she was doing. It was some few moments before he realized what she was watching—a figure weaving back and forth across the red beacon, half dancing, half walking and sometimes humming. It was feminine movement, tempestuous and coaxing and remote at the same time.

The juke-box died. She gave it a vicious kick and it belched forth a soft rumba. They watched her saunter across the floor in silhouette, straightening a chair here and there. "Silk—" Ord called.

She stared blindly into the darkness and swerved toward them. "Well?" she demanded sulkily.

"Silk, you remember me. Ord Bennett."

Silk gave him a careless salute. And then it dawned on her, with the intuitive sixth sense of a plain-stalking tigress. Her hands gripped the edge of their table and she leaned halfway across it, searching out Daley, certain Daley was there.

In the meager light Daley caught the full impact of her strange beauty—the dark, too-straight brow, the full lower lip, the spare jaw line, and her hair pulled up in a weird frou-frou at the top of her head. There was everlasting restlessness inherent in her slight shoulders. "Hello, Silk," Daley said, in a more than normal voice. "I really am glad to know you."

The short space between them crackled with the intensity of Silk's hatred. "Clever girl—" she said softly. "You knew I'd get around to you sooner or later, but you beat me to the draw."

"Please—" Daley interjected.

"'Please,' she says," mocked Silk. "I suppose that's what trapped him. Maybe I didn't say please enough."

"For God's sake," Ord said.

Silk's head shot round and the frou-frou quivered. "Keep out of this!"

"You've got to listen to me, Silk," Daley pleaded. "You may not want to believe me, but you've got to listen. Chris would have wanted you to."

Silk regarded her suspiciously. "Talk on."

"He never betrayed you. Not actually," Daley said gently. "Because he never really forgot you. And if I tell you, can't you believe it?"

Silk threw back her head and laughed. It was a mirthless laugh. It unnerved and embarrassed Ord, and when it stopped, Silk said harshly, "He married you, didn't he?"

Daley paused. "Men make strange mistakes when they are lonely. I know. I was the victim of such a mistake. And if anyone has the right to be bitter about this, Silk, I am that person."

Silk stood up impatiently and moved about in a small circle, hugging her arms and surveying her slippers. When she sat down again, she drummed fretfully on the table. "I don't get it. What do you want?"

The rumba meandered to a slow finish, and the silence hung heavy, accented by the rhythm of cards from the back room.

Daley put forth a compassionate hand. "I was curious," she admitted. "I had to see for myself the woman a man could love so desperately. You have known the heights, Silk. And no one can take that from you. Or from Chris, for that matter. I envy both of you."

Silk turned her head away hastily; there was a pathetic contortion to her profile. Then with a gasp she buried her head in her hands, her body rocking forward to her knees. The hollow stillness of the Buckhorn vibrated with her sobs, and the doorway of the card room filled with the simple contours of awkward men.

Daley and Ord left quietly. In the car, he gathered her in and kissed her with an intensity which would never otherwise be able to express itself. There was no longer even the slight doubt of Chris between them, because together they had just done a wonderful thing for a lost soul. And together, somehow, they would reclaim St. John too.

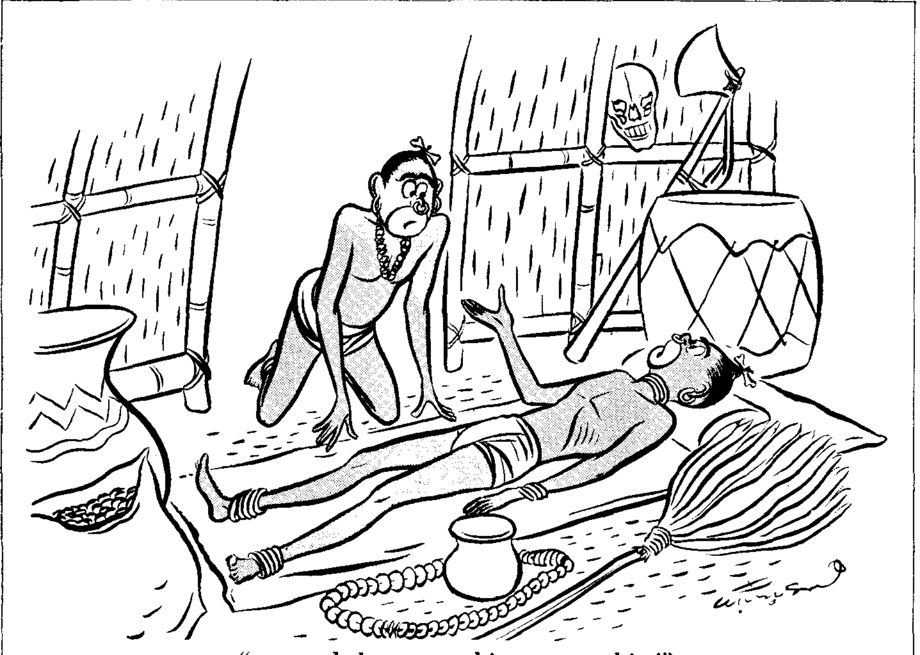
IT WAS past midnight when they drove up to the ranch. The young moon was a tilted sliver on the edge of the vast plateau, and a soft wind had risen to usher in the morning.

St. John was sitting upright in the tufted leather chair, a haunted guilt at the back of his eyes. He flushed nervously as Daley came over to kiss him.

Without taking off her coat, she sat down on the arm of his chair and gave him an eager, friendly hug. "If you only knew how good it is to be home, you wouldn't round on us like an angry Buddha for being late," she reproved. "Anyway, you're a dear for waiting up, and I suppose it was rotten of us to run out this afternoon. But one doesn't tear off on a trip to Regina every day, thank heaven!"

St. John watched Ord grin at him, then shoot his hat expertly at the antler rack. It was the new Ord, but still the old Ord. And St. John understood gratefully that the wind and the locusts would nevermore matter, for the reckoning was over.

THE END



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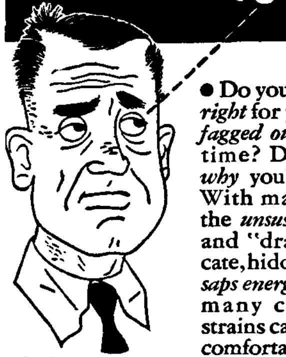

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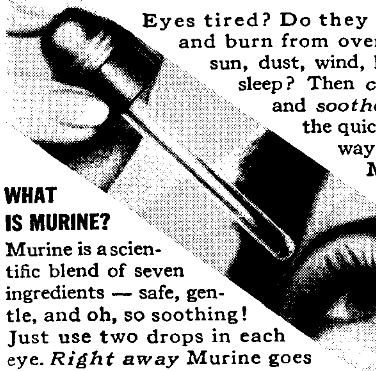

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Army Wedding

Continued from page 13

air-crew physical that he didn't like. But Liz smiled. The metal dishes fairly clattered on the tables.

Jack Stevens was the first to break the silence. He scraped back his chair and strode over to them. "Hello, Doc!" he cried, sticking out his hand, as though he and the surgeon hadn't seen each other for years.

Bob Tracy was right behind him. No one could hear what the doc was saying, but it was obvious that he was introducing them to the girl.

"Won't you sit down, Miss Kelly?" Jack asked smoothly, pulling out a chair.

"Yes, right here, Miss Kelly!" Bob said quickly, scraping another across the rough floor.

She smiled at them. "Shall I sit here in the middle?" she asked, compromising.

That is the way it began. Liz in the middle.

JACK STEVENS and Bob Tracy had been friends since the day they first reported to the squadron. Jack was the one people wrote home about.

No one knew much about him. Actually they weren't too anxious for information that would crack that shell of difference that surrounded him. They preferred to think that he had seen intrigue in the Argentine and carried brief cases of state secrets across borders and had affairs with heavy-lidded swaying women who spoke with an accent.

The squadron adjutant was able to tell the lads a bit of official information about him, though. He had flown over South America, had flown as a fighter in the AVG for a bit, had spent six months in Russia selling farm machinery as a kid of nineteen.

Jack flew as if he had been born in a Liberator. He flew calmly, knowing each sound of his engines, thinking of his plane as a woman must think of her house.

"Flying crates with language you don't understand on the instrument panel teaches you a thing or two," he had once said.

His audience—none of whom had ever even seen a crate with language on the instrument panel that they couldn't understand—had nodded wisely. And the picture of a lone monoplane humming over the Andes came to their minds; a flimsy biplane sputtering over the Alps; a little cabin job dipping perilously close to angry, choppy arctic waters. That was Jack.

No one bothered to write home about Bob. He came from Ohio and had quit college to go into cadet training. He was going to be an architect, he said, and design nothing but powder rooms and night-watchman shacks. He had aunts who sent him cookies and knitted socks and newspaper clippings from the local papers. He had a mother who wrote him every other day and a pretty, wide-eyed girl named Phyllis who deluged him with snapshots of herself holding his cocker spaniel or perched on the arm of a lawn chair in a new dress and a picture hat.

Bob was a wiry, freckle-faced kid with a laugh that cackled all over the squadron and a way of flying his B-24 that brought smiles of pleasure even to Jack's critical pan. He was good to have around. He made you feel that all was right with the world.

Jack and Bob lived together. Possibly there were things about Jack that Bob knew and that the others did not. If so, he said nothing. He ribbed Jack unmercifully, called him the Flying Lothario and the Pilot with Bedroom Eyes, and would have believed, without hesitation, that Shirley Temple designed the B-24, had Jack told him so.

Jack treated Bob as if he was a slightly unbalanced younger brother. He growled at him for trying a bluff on a pair of treys, bawled him out because he sang so loud and so off key, and always managed to be somewhere in the background whenever Bob was taking off or when he was landing from a flight on which Jack had not been.

The odds of the squadron were that Bob, in the Liz-Jack-Bob affair, was strictly the little brother who would be given a quarter eventually and told to run to the PX to buy himself some shaving cream. Women became room temperature and dissolved around Jack. That was understood. Wisely, the squadron also decided that it was a shame, in a way. A girl who reminded you of dance music and picnics and late Sunday-morning breakfasts in a sunny room, and the White Mountains just as October curls the leaves, just wasn't Jack's kind of woman.

Liz came often to the squadron. Either Jack or Bob would bounce away in a jeep to call for her. She would arrive, laughing, absently trying to fix her hair. She would be clean and cool-looking in her bleached cotton. She walked with her shoulders back and head up. Into the mess hall she would come, waving and calling, holding Jack's hand and looking for Bob; holding Bob's arm and asking about Jack.

When she talked to Jack, everyone thought: Surely this will be the night when she becomes a good friend of Bob's and nothing more.

But the next minute Liz would have her shoulder turned to Jack and would be laughing with Bob, watching intently as he talked to her, frowning, gesturing, running his hands over his crew cut.

That was the way it was when the grapevine first quivered with the news that Jack was waiting orders to return to the States. He had had his mission time in for over a month. Rumor said that he wasn't being returned on air-crew rotation and that the holdup was because an old flying chum of his in Washington was swinging a really good assignment for him.

Two days later, Liz announced that she was waiting for her recall to the States. They wanted her in Washington for another job, and she explained that because it was an important job, she felt she couldn't refuse.

Those things coming so close together would have been good for exhaustive examination at any other time. Men could sit with their sock feet propped up on the benches in the tent and drink the precious warm beer and speculate on the assignment coming to Jack and the job waiting for Liz; the beauties of going home. They could wonder about Bob and how it would seem the day when Liz wouldn't be around, and Jack would be gone.

But there wasn't time. There was a feel to the air in those days like the last five minutes of a football game, or like when you were a kid, standing with your face scrunched up waiting for the fuse of the firecracker to burn to the powder.

Each day came in as hot and bright as the million before it. The sun beat down on the metal matting of the runways and kept the sides of the planes, the hoods of the jeeps, the tools, hot to the touch.

Suddenly it was a full schedule again. Lights burned late in the offices, and the men on the line were getting punchy from lack of sleep. There was only time to hail Jack "Hey, Short Timer!" as they passed on the way to the briefing room; to the shower; at predawn, swollen-eyed, breakfast; after-dusk, groggy, bone-weary, supper.

IT WAS the first day in ten that both Jack and Bob were together all day. Ear fungus had grounded Jack and weather-over-target kept Bob at home. They were shaving in front of the tent when Bob learned that Jack's orders were actually in.

Bob dipped his brush in his helmet and sent a fine spray of soapy water into Jack's face. "The back of me hand to ya!" he yelled.

They laughed and talked about home then in monosyllables, peering into the small hand mirrors tacked against the post, clacking their razors on the rims of the battered helmets. They talked of bars and neon signs and barbershops and hotel rooms and of the food a man could buy just for the asking.

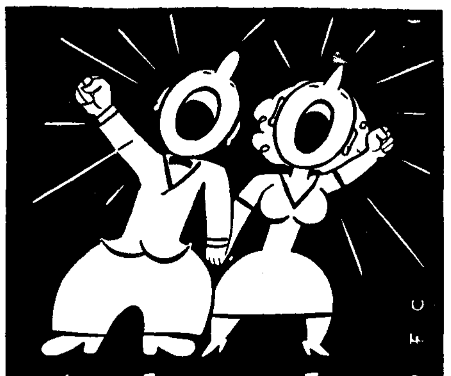
"I've got to go see Liz this afternoon and break the news," Jack said.

"Yeah."

"It's working out too well," Jack explained. "I'll draw out with luck like this. Liz will be home about the same time I'm there—for part of the time, anyway," he said, looking at Bob out of the corner of his eye.

Bob was guiding the razor down his upper lip, squinting his eyes in concentration.

"I'm in love with her, Bob."



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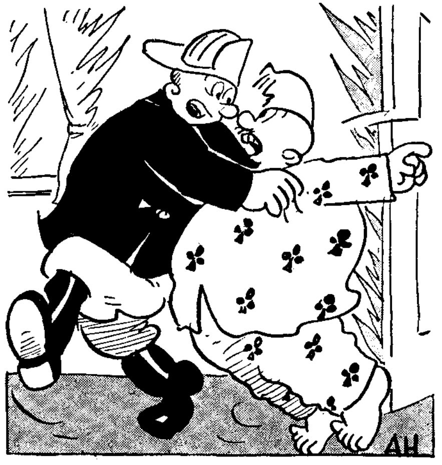

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"Razor's not worth a damn!"

"I'm going over this afternoon and—" Jack hesitated, "and talk to her. What do you think?"

"I think it's swell," Bob said, wiping the lather from his face.

"Do you think it will make any difference? How does she feel, I wonder." Jack stopped. Absently he dried his razor.

"Don't know, chum. You can't tell about women. You told me that yourself." Bob threw the water from his helmet. The sun caught the water arc before it splashed into the earth.

"That's right," Jack admitted ruefully. "How much time before chow?"

Bob was strapping on his watch. "Five minutes."

"Ready?"

"Don't think I'll go, Jack. I'm not so hungry. I can use sack time more."

Bob ducked into the tent, put his shaving kit on the shelf, hung up the towel, fell on his cot He kept his eyes closed while Jack put on a shirt and pants and combed his hair.

Jack went out whistling. The sun beat down on the canvas and made the mattress cover hot to the touch. Bob swung his feet over the side of the cot and rubbed his hands over his sweating face. He could hear them in the mess hall, clattering the metal dishes, talking, scraping the chairs. He reached for a cigarette and sat on the edge of the cot, squinting out into the white noonday glare and at the patch of rustling spiked *kunai* grass that caught the sun.

THAT night Bob waited for Liz in the cheerless boxlike room called a parlor by the Red Cross girls and the nurses. He teetered back and forth on his heels, jingling his change in his pockets, leaning over to peer at the pictures tacked to the wall. He whistled tunelessly as he studied an old movie still of a rock-jawed profile of Cary Grant and a starry-eyed Martha Scott from Howards of Virginia. He'd seen that in Mobile, he remembered.

"Hello, Robert."

He turned with a start. She was standing very close to him, smiling. "Hi, Liz."

"Why didn't you tell me you were coming?" she asked.

"Didn't know until a minute ago. Jack went to Group to see about some things. I saw those magazines lying around the tent" —he nodded to a stack of them on the table —"and remembered how you've been after us to bring them over."

Liz hurried to the table. "They're wonderful. The boys in the wards will love them!"

He sauntered over. "Most of the good cheesecake has already been cut out, so they won't love them quite as much as they might have."

Liz straightened the magazines. "We're grateful for all small favors," she replied, with mock primness.

"Like to walk to the bridge? I can only stay a minute. Early briefing tomorrow."

She walked to the door. The bare wooden plank steps sprang a bit under their feet. The rectangle of light from the parlor threw spangles into the deep puddles of the dirt road. The dripping leaves of the Pandanus trees along the path and the damp, sandy earth and the puddles were the only reminders of the drenching rain of an hour ago. The sky was clear and dark like navy-blue agate glass and the air was free of the damp, odor-filled touch that rain can leave in far-distant lands like Missouri or Texas or the Carolinas.

THEY walked in silence, the black sand-soil gritting under their feet. The heavy Army-built bridge had its beginning and ending in the shadows of the river grass and banyan shoots. The early moonlight slipped over the thick, splintered, mire-muddied center of the bridge.

Bob let Liz precede him. He felt more tired than he had ever felt in all his life. Never before had his legs been so shaky, his head so heavy. His hands were damp and he could feel the perspiration rolling down his cheek, wetting his shirt across his chest.

Liz stopped and leaned on the railing, looking down into the black, heavy water of the stream that made no noise as it flowed past the pilings of the bridge. Bob put his elbows on the rail.

"Still think it's an ugly river?" he asked.

She nodded. "It's a hideous river. Probably this river will be a nightmare someday. When I'm home, in my own bed, I'll dream of falling into it and spending the rest of eternity sinking down and down in that warm rotten-smelling water with jillions of little crawling things swimming at me."

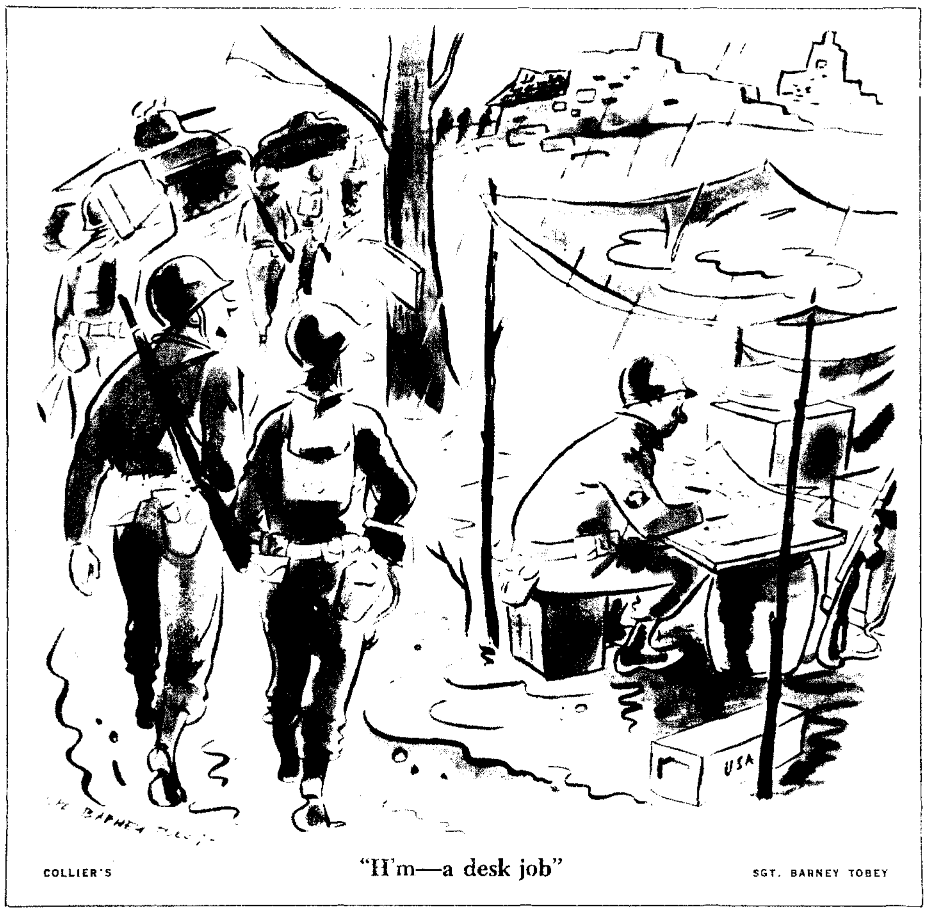
"Shouldn't have nightmares at home, Liz. Home is where everything is right," he said slowly, staring down at the river.

"Not always. You just remember it that way."

"The rain has a smell there, and there is fall and spring, and rivers freeze in the winter."

"All of those things are very nice," Liz said quietly. "May I have a cigarette?"

He held his pack to her. The sudden bright flame of his lighter shadowed hollows in her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cheeks and made her eyes seem enormous as she bent to get her light.

"Liz, I know Jack was here this afternoon. I know why he came."

She looked at the small red glow her cigarette made against the background of the river. Without turning she said, "Yes, Jack was here. . . ."

JACK had driven over in a jeep. She had come directly from the wards to the parlor. The low wooden hospital was like an oven. She walked with quick, irritated steps, brushing the damp wisp of hair from her forehead. Jack was looking out of the window at the maroon-bathrobed patients in the yard.

"Jack, what are you doing here?"

He turned, grinning broadly. He walked to her. "Liz, I'm going home! Orders are in."

"That's wonderful." She sank onto the wicker couch. "I'm very glad, Jack."

He dropped down on the couch beside her. "We'll be there about the same time, Liz. I'll get there a bit ahead of you, but it isn't sure I'll go right back across. There are some things I'd like to swing while I'm home. But that can wait," he said impatiently.

"The important thing is that we'll be in the U.S. together for a while and—" He hesitated for only a second—"and that I'm in love with you. We could be married in Washington, Liz. They'll give you a leave if you ask, won't they? Or throw the whole thing up. We'll have some time together." He looked at her intently. "What do you say, Liz?"

The sounds of bugs and wind cracking the palm fronds and the love-making of a couple of empty-headed parrots blended in with that strange breathing sound of a jungle afternoon. A lizard climbed up the screen of the door and darted its cold, quick body across to the wall. One of the fatigue detail checked the lister bag outside the door and bellowed, "This'n' don't need any." The water truck bounced away.

Liz took a deep breath. "I can't tell you now, Jack. Not here. We must have a long talk. I've really got to get back to the wards now." She was sorry, and surprised to find it sounding so matter-of-fact; as if she were telling one of the corpsmen to bring rubbing alcohol.

Jack stood up, grinning. "Okay, Liz. I don't blame you. Before I'd promise to marry a guy like me, I'd want to talk to him, too. But I'm telling you now, I'll agree to all the laws you lay down. I'll even take a desk job and raise dahlias and Plymouth Rock chickens if you want."

Liz patted her forehead with a damp, tight ball of handkerchief. "You *are* a fool, Jack Stevens. An utter fool!" she said fondly.

"Got to go, sweet. I'll come for you tomorrow night before dinner. Gotta go to Group tonight and see the colonel. Get back to your valley of pain."

She walked to the door with him. "I'll be ready."

He leaped from the steps and climbed into the jeep, his long legs shoving his knees against the dash. "Roger. Adios!"

The jeep backed up with a roar. He waved as he drove away. She waved. For a moment she had stood there, looking after him. The fine dust settled slowly, and the shimmery heat reappeared, making the Pandanus trees down the road dance nervously as she looked at them.

Then she walked back to the wards, feeling very tired and wishing very much that it were time to go and lie down; wishing there was a cold bath and a cool, dark room waiting for her when the time did come. There were tears in her eyes and they burned. Her head began to throb. . . .

NOW Liz knew Bob expected her to say something besides "Yes, Jack was here." She kept looking at the cigarette she held. By looking at it, everything around her grew black—only that small hot red glow between her fingers.

Bob tossed his cigarette into the water. He turned to her: "Jack is my best friend. He's a great guy. I'd do anything for him. And he's in love with you, Liz. . . ."

Liz had turned so that he could see her face. The cigarette between her fingers was almost burned out. She scarcely seemed to be breathing. In the moonlight her tanned face was pale.

In the murky shadows, Bob felt cold and knew his knees were trembling. "You'll tell me," he hurried on, "that we will always be friends. And we will. Lord, someday I'll be seeing you and Jack again. But before you go, I've got to tell you something. I don't think I'd ever get over it if you both left and I hadn't told you. It wouldn't be fair actually. Tomorrow there is a flight. From then on, it is back to the dawn-to-dark run. Sometime in there, both of you will be leaving, so this will be my last chance." His hand was gripping the railing and he was speaking very fast, his voice so low that it wouldn't have been audible if the dirty river had made any noise as it moved beneath the bridge.

"I'm in love with you, Lizzie. Jack isn't sure when he fell in love with you but I know when I did. It was the first second I saw you." He took a deep breath. "Now I've got to go."

"Aren't you even going to wait until I say something?" she asked.

A cloud must have trailed across the moon, for she didn't look pale any longer. Her hand wasn't lying quietly against the rail. She stepped closer to him, her eyes on his face.

"It's okay, Liz," he said softly. "You don't have to say anything."

Then she stood very close to him and put her arms up around his neck and pulled his lips down to hers. For one crazy second he stood, hands at his sides, eyes open. Then he clutched her very tightly, his arms straining her to him.

It was strange that as he held her in his arms and kissed her, the black, still river no longer flowed quietly but rushed past the bridge like a freshet, roaring as it went, filling the night with its noise.

"I won't see him until tomorrow night, dear, to talk to him," Bob whispered, his lips close to her ear. "Not until I come back. Then I'll tell him."

She tilted back her head and looked up at him. "You'd rather tell him?"

He nodded. "With Jack, yes."

"Then let me be there, too. I'm coming over for dinner tomorrow. We'll tell him then. It would be better—the three of us, I mean."

"All right, darling. . . ."

AT LAST Liz said gently, "I've got to go in, Bob. You've got to get some sleep if you've an early briefing."

They had been sitting on the edge of the bridge, the railing over their heads, swinging their feet. Bob helped her up. "I don't need sleep now. I could fly that mission without a plane!"

"Is it going to be a big one, Bob?"

"Why?"

"Because I darn' near die every time you fly one of the things, is all!"

He pulled her back to him. "Do you, Liz?" he asked incredulously.

She looked up at him. "Do I!" She let her head fall on his chest. "Oh, my darling, my darling, my darling! I used to know when you were going to fly and I'd have to be just an old buddy and wish you well and laugh, and all the time I wanted to cry and remind you to buckle your overshoes and carry an umbrella. When it came time for you to come over after me at night, I used to wait and torture myself by thinking: He won't come. And then when I'd see you in the jeep and I knew nothing had happened, I'd want to weep with happiness."

"Why didn't you?" he asked, smiling above her head into the dusk. "Why didn't you?"

"Oh, the powerful male! Would you have had me throw myself at your head like a hussy, with you giving no more sign that you loved me than if I'd been your—your crew chief!"

"I love my crew chief and I wish you *had* thrown yourself at my head," he chuckled.

Hands clasped, they left the bridge. The river behind them was still again. Night birds twittered uneasily, and the leaves of the banyan made dark stripes against the moon-washed road. The scent of the frangipani was heavy in the darkness.

As he kissed her good night, she whispered, "That sound you hear, my dearest, is my heart singing."

"We've got a duet," he said.

"I wish it were going to be a duet on that flight tomorrow."

"It will be—for the rest of our lives, Liz. And don't worry about the flight, honey. You've been around too long for that."

"That's why I worry; ignorance can be bliss. But I won't tonight. I'll squeeze my eyes together and sleep and dream. And tomorrow you won't enter my thoughts once."

"That's my girl!"

"That's your liar!" she said ruefully. "Now good night, Bob." She hurried up the stairs and into the parlor, not looking back.

Bob walked slowly to his jeep, whistling, thinking about the duet.

MOST of the squadron was on the line at dawn when the Liberators roared into taxiing position and hunched down for the run before they lifted their long noses into the sky.

No one except those whose job it was knew the details of the flight. But that it was important, everyone knew. They could tell by the way the men had pampered the planes, starting them again and again; listening to every murmur of the great engines. They could tell by the lights that had been burning before dawn in the briefing room. And the Group CO himself came down to watch the take-off.

Floyd Fitch led. Despite the long briefing, he went about talking to the pilots and crews until the take-off signal from Operations. The navigators hacked their watches. Men were scrambling in and out of the waiting ships like kids playing around freight cars.

Bob was flying right wing of the first echelon. He was talking to his crew, making motions with his hands. Then came the signal, and the men went to their planes, laughing and hanging on one another's necks and making racket.

The men who were left behind watched them get into the planes, frowning, checking over in their minds for the hundredth time to make sure they had done all that was required of them.

Old Sergeant Debruowitz, the bowlegged line chief, was scuttling up and down, chewing his cold cigar, painting the fresh morning air a bright blue with his aimless, sincere profanity.

After breakfast the men ambled off to their jobs, wisely concluding that it was going to be a helluva day. It wasn't zero seven hundred yet, and already shirts were plastered to backs and sweat ran down their temples and cheeks. . . .

Everyone headed back for the line after evening chow. The dusk was beginning to creep in from the jungle. It would be another hour before it put shadows over the runway, but you could feel it, waiting there in the jungle. The sun was setting in a glory that made it seem as if all the colors of all the world were splashed on that one section of the evening sky.

Suddenly there was the sound of planes—so faint that it could have been imagination or could have just been a jeep on a twisted jungle road. There were no words. The men, on the line, stood motionless, listening, trying to translate those sounds into a story. It was then that Liz appeared, and went to stand by Jack. He turned in surprise. "Hello!"

"Hello, there. That driver you sent for me is a frustrated pilot. We came in with the flaps on the jeep down!"

"They're coming in now, Liz," Jack said, grinning. He took her hand.

Just as he spoke, the first plane appeared on course. When it landed, it crashed past like a streamliner. The rattling of the metal matting was deafening. "That's Smith!" somebody yelled.

The ship turned and came back more slowly, muttering and blowing like an exhausted old gelding at the end of the hunt.

One after another, they came in, and it wasn't long before they were all there; all but one.

Jack was everywhere, asking questions and shaking hands and pounding backs and leaning a bit to listen more closely to the quick stories of the men who had flown the mission—who had been there and seen.

Liz leaned against a jeep, talking to one of the men.

The dusk had crawled through the vines and across the trees and settled, at last, over the runway. The palms were stylized and black against the still colorful sky. But even that color was draining. The first star appeared. The smell of hot oil and machines and sweat and gas clung to the place.

Liz's voice carried as clearly as though she had sung out: "Jack, where is Bob?"

"They lost sight of him, Liz," he said quietly. "But he's not much overdue," he added quickly.

"Do we wait here?" she asked steadily.

"How about going to the tent?"

They walked off together. The sky was as empty of sound as it was the second day of creation.

JACK dealt a gin-rummy hand and for nearly an hour they tried playing.

"That is the third queen you've given me, young lady—Gin!" He fanned his cards onto the table.

"Another?" He gathered up the cards.

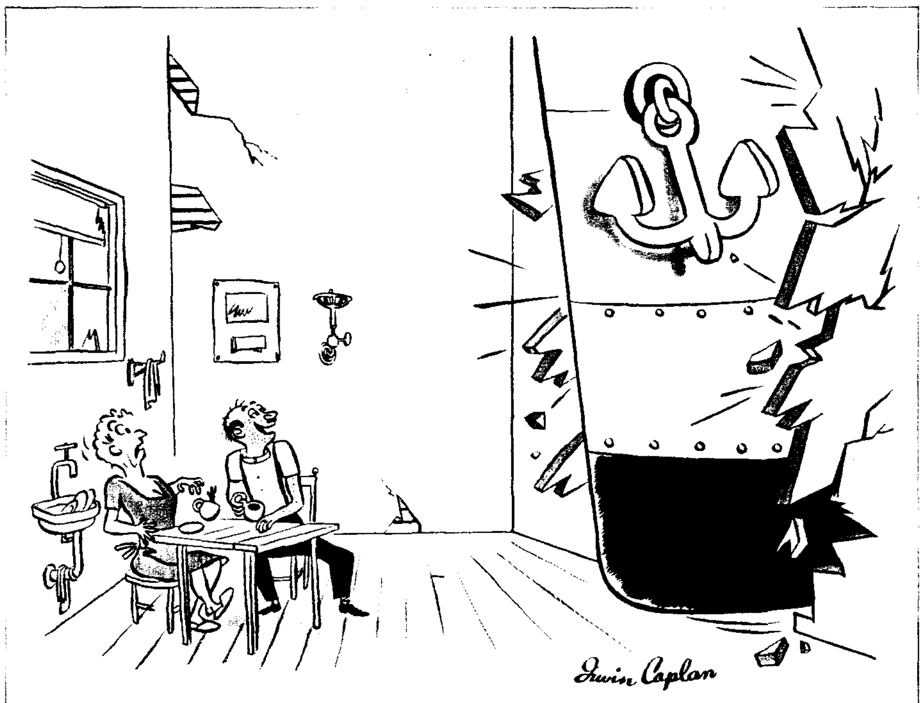
She shook her head. "Now what time is it?"

"Not late at all."

"It's late enough. But don't tell me how much."

She took a cigarette out of the pack on the table. He held out his lighter to her. She put her elbows on the Army blanket that covered the table and pressed the heels of her palms to her temples.

"I'll walk down and see Skinny," Jack



COLLIER'S "Well, well, looks like my ship finally came in!" IRWIN CAPLAN

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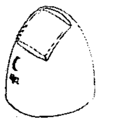

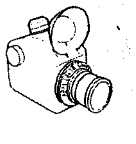

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said. "Maybe he's found something. Be right back."

"Call Grace and tell her I'm staying until we find out!" Liz called after him. She could hear his steps for a moment and then it was still. Liz stood up. Bugs batted themselves against the naked bulb of the tent. She looked about. The tent was cluttered with the things that made this a home to Bob and Jack: bleached khakis hanging lifelessly from the pegs of the poles, wrinkled shoes under the cots, a fat bag of laundry behind Bob's mosquito-net-draped cot.

She walked over and looked at his pin-ups. The tent was papered with them. Hundreds of long legs and arched feet and pointing lips, and bodies twisted to give lines. She turned away and went back to the table to finger the writing pad, the peanut can made into an ash tray, to look at the small framed pictures of a round-faced smiling woman and a gray-haired man with the same cowlick as Bob's: "To Robert from Mother and Dad with all their love." Then there was the sweet smile and long bob of a girl who gave all of her love for always. That must be Phyllis.

"Sorry, Phyllis Whatever-your-name-is," Liz said softly. "I win. But be glad you're not here now."

Her watch ticked the minutes by. She listened to it until it seemed to be synchronized with her breathing and heartbeats. Outside was the scratching, moving, slippery silence of the jungle. Far away were faint noises of voices and of metal striking metal. Now and again the guard walked by casually, his steps telling of his boredom. She clenched her fists, breathing rapidly. For one horrible moment she thought she was going to scream.

SHE was sitting at the table, reading, when Jack came in. He ducked into the tent and said, "Nothing yet, Liz. But Phil's going to call me the second they get word."

She looked up. "If word doesn't come, Jack, it will mean he went down, won't it?"

He nodded. The ticking of her watch sounded again, and slowly, like a thoughtful dancer, fell in step with her breathing.

Jack stood there, his hands on the back of the chair, looking at her. He saw the first tears that filled her eyes and saw how very hard she tried not to cry. He saw the resolve break and the composure crumple before she buried her head in her arms. Her hair fell on the Army blanket, and for one second he wished she would make noise in her weeping. Such silent, shaking weeping was terrible to see.

Then he was at her side, crouched down beside her, one arm about her waist.

At last she raised her head and groped for her handkerchief. Her voice shook a bit as she said, "I don't feel any better for all that fuss."

"How long have you loved him, Liz?" he asked deliberately, holding a cigarette out to her.

She looked up. She inhaled and took the cigarette from her lips.

He grinned ruefully. "I guess it doesn't matter how long."

"I didn't want it to happen like this, Jack," she said soberly, her lashes still wet. "He was going to tell you. He said he wanted to. I didn't know myself that he loved me until last night when he came over. He came over to tell me. . . ." Her voice trailed away. "I'm so sorry, Jack, that it hurts you. You're his best friend. We've always been, the three of us, so . . ."

He fingered the cigarette package. "It's all right, Liz. Bob's a swell gent—the best. It's probably better this way. I'd be no good for you. I roam around too much. And once you start, you can't stop, no matter how much you may think you're going to."

She smiled at him, and he stood up. "Now, young lady, how about you hitting the sack? It won't do any good to sit here and swat bugs. They'll let us know when there's any word."

He opened the mosquito net on Bob's cot, and she lay down. Carefully he tucked it in around her. "Your hair needs combing, your nose is red, and your lipstick is gone," he bantered. "You don't need a mosquito net. You need a veil!"

She didn't sleep. She lay there, her head pillowed on her hands, staring at the blackness up by the canvas.

At the table, Jack began to deal a solitaire hand. He handled each card as carefully as though he were fitting it into an intricate pattern. Finally he stopped and sat there, smoking.

LIZ awakened with a start. Jack's hand was on her shoulder. She sat up, her eyes wide.

"What?"

"A crash boat received a pick-up call. Phil thinks it's Bob. They'll be docking soon—if the radioed position is right."

Liz scrambled from the cot.

"Here's something to wake you up." He gave her a canteen cup of black coffee. "It's pretty hot."

"Have we time?" she asked, running a comb through her hair.

"Sure. And, Liz," he said soberly, "it might not be the one. The radioman sent an S O S an hour ago. Unless the navigator was right on the nose, they'll have to wait until it gets light and send out snoopers. The radio went off with the message."

She sipped her coffee, holding the cup in both hands. Over the rim of the cup her eyes were wide. "Yes, Jack."

"There's a jeep outside. Here." He held out a battered leather jacket. "It will be cool for a bit yet."

She shrugged into the jacket, pushing up the sleeves.

They rode in silence. The jeep bounced over the rutted roads. In the predawn darkness, the jungle was black and solid, keeping its mystery until the first light fired the sky. Liz sat tense, her hands twisted together, her jaw set. . . .

When they reached the dock they saw that the crash boat had tied up. Liz jumped from the jeep and ran past the MP guard before he could stop her.

They caught just a glimpse of Bob as he was being put into the ambulance. His clothes were dripping water and there was oil on his face.

Jack went to speak to the warrant officer who was skipper of the boat, and Liz moved over to stand beside the doctor. She was listening very attentively, her eyes on his lips. Then she spoke. He nodded and patted her arm.

Liz hurried over to Jack. "The doctor says I may go with him. Bob's—" she paused. "He isn't doing so well, Jack."

Jack nodded slowly. "I know." He looked down at her. "Tell him I'll be over to see him when they let me. And take good care of him, Liz."

She pressed his hand and hurried off to the ambulance, head up, shoulders back. The medical captain held open the door for her. Jack stood watching her. His cigarette burned itself out between his fingers and he didn't hear the warrant officer who was still talking.

That was the last time he saw her. . . .

Within a couple of days, Jack left for the States. He said goodby to Liz by telephone. He did go once more to the hospital. Bob was still under the medicine. But the danger was gone. Jack left a note with the nurse for him and shook the limp hand. Bob didn't even know he had been there. Jack left the bottle of Scotch with Skinny Farnsworth and said goodby to the squadron. . . .

EVERYONE was laughing and crowding about Liz and Bob. Grace was wiping her eyes and trying to laugh and saying jerkily, "But it was such a sweet wedding!"

Bob held up his hand. "First," he said, "we'll have a drink. There is enough for a thimbleful apiece if I don't spill a drop. We'll drink a toast to the guy who gave it to us. And we'll drink to Mrs. Robert J. Tracy, Jr. May she have a pleasant journey home!"

Everyone applauded and laughed and gathered around.

"Mrs. Robert J. Tracy, Jr.! That's you, darling," Bob said softly, looking down at her.

Her eyes were luminous. "Yes, my dear. I know," she whispered. "Now, let's pour those drinks!"

The End

Wing Talk

Continued from page 8

coiled up into the air and hung like a crape over Dead Man's Gulch.

Plane after plane tore in until the entire ridge was bathed in flames. By the time the Death Dealers had finished working over Dead Man's Gulch, it had a new nickname —Dante's Inferno—for they left it a boiling hell.

One pilot's bomb would not release. He was First Lieutenant Nicholas J. Virgets, Jr., of New Orleans. Virgets took his hot potato high out over the flat blue waters of the Pacific and pushed over into a dive, pouring on the coal until he was clocking better than 400 knots. Still the bomb wouldn't come off.

TO MAKE matters worse, a plane on patrol saw his wild gyrations, mistook him for one of the enemy and made two passes at him before getting the word.

A destroyer was below Virgets, while a Black Cat rescue plane hovered near by. His fellow pilots, waiting in the ready room back at the field, crossed their fingers as they heard his voice come over the radio saying, "Here goes nothing. Hope that 'can' has ice cream and cake for supper."

Virgets tried four times to climb out of his cockpit before he made it. Then his chute popped open, and the doomed plane zipped by him, made three wobbly chandelles, missed the waiting destroyer by a scant thirty feet, and hit the water, exploding in a sheet of flame.

Three sharks cruised near the floundering airman before he was picked out of the water, and the skipper of the destroyer read him off for nearly sinking his ship with the pilotless plane.

They were having ice cream and cake for supper on the can, but just as Virgets was reaching for a spoon to dig in, a crash boat called with an urgent message for him to return to the beach.

When the last Japs had been killed on Peleliu, the Death Dealers took their flying flame-throwers against Japanese positions on other Jap-held islands in the Palaus with fearsome success. Information based on these experiments has paid off at Iwo Jima, in the Philippines and at Okinawa where flickering flames from the dread fire bombs have helped burn a path for the infantry. . . .

CAPT. EARL J. WILSON, USMC.

The First Rifle

Continued from page 19

left him with practically nothing to shoot, but his father told him shooting ground squirrels and gophers and rats was all right, but not the small hawks and the black snakes because they did no harm and helped the farmers get rid of small bugs and other crop-eating varmints.

Now he was almost a man. He had a rifle and he could go hunting with his father, and in two more years he would get a .410 shotgun and go after pheasants and ducks. The war would be over by then, he was sure, and his brother would come home and help him do all those fine things they had done together in the old, good, quiet days.

He could sit beside the stove in his father's office and listen to the men talk about past times around Hopkinsville—about the great wolf hunt and how thick the rabbits were in '23, and how large the pheasant crop would be that coming fall. But best of all, he would be one of them, for he had a gun now, and when they talked about rifles and shotguns, he could sit and look wise and understand just what they meant; they might even ask him what he had shot, and he could up and tell them about all the things he would have shot by that time. For he would surely have a lot of game before the war was over and Bill came home. . . .

He fired at the tin can five times and hit it twice, knocking it deeper into the soft mud and denting one side deeply, so that the sunlight, slanting steeply now through the willow tree, flashed off the caved-in side and showed the two black holes where his bullets had bored on through. He felt good inside and very happy, and he got down from the bridge railing and walked across the bridge and up the track toward the big curve in the creek, where the old oak tree leaned over the big boys' swimming hole. He knew there were jack rabbits in the brush across the creek, and if he was lucky he might sneak up on a gopher or ground squirrel in the high pasture above the oak tree, just across the right-of-way fence. He thought that ought to be pretty good if he shot a gopher his very first time out and brought it back for his father to see.

He came up abreast of the creek curve and looked down at the swimming hole, wide and green-colored, six feet deep in the cutaway bend of the creek, the old oak leaning over gravely, its low overhanging branches brushing the far bank of the creek. The grass was deep on the far side, and on his side, up the hill from the creek in the fresh green pasture grass, he heard the first evening cricket call and caught the deep mellow sound of the bell on the lead cow in Behmer's herd, heading up the path for the barn and evening milking.

He climbed up the red clay bank and sneaked carefully to the right-of-way fence and peeked through, across the bending swell of the upper pasture, looking with special care at the greener, higher clumps of grass which sprouted up at irregular intervals. He knew that these clumps were caused by the fertilization of manure dropped the year before, and that the gophers and ground squirrels usually dug one of their holes near them.

He saw nothing around the near clumps, but about thirty yards into the pasture he thought he saw something move beside a small bush. He poked the rifle through the fence and took a steady aim on the bush, resting the rifle against the fence post and his left hand. His brother had told him this was perfectly all right, that he should always use a solid support whenever he found one handy, and that it wasn't cheating at all.

HE WAITED three minutes and could see nothing, and then he remembered a trick his father had taught him during the winter: how ground squirrels were inquisitive and if you whistled sharply, sometimes they would sit straight up on their behinds and look all around them, trying to see who it was; if they did that, you had your chance to pop them off.

He licked his lips carefully, pursed them together and blasted the lazy silence with a good loud whistle. And then he saw the squirrel pop up beside the bush on its little mound of earth and look around, head high in the air, nose sniffing daintily, small black eyes wide and bright.

He drew down on the squirrel with speed, for he knew he had to shoot fast and straight and would get just one shot: the moment the rifle went off, every squirrel and gopher within hearing would run to the bottom of their holes and stay there until dark. So he took careful, quick aim, got the squirrel's white belly in his sights, just absolutely perfect, and squeezed off the shot.

The sharp crack made him jump this time, but only after he had fired; and when he looked, he could see nothing of the squirrel in the deep green grass around the bush. A bluejay called angrily and flew from one tree to another along the creek bank, and a big jack rabbit jumped up about fifty yards across the creek and loped, with lazy-looking ten-foot hops, over the hill into the cornfield behind the Lutheran church.

He opened the breach of the .22, remembering what both his father and brother had told him about climbing through fences with

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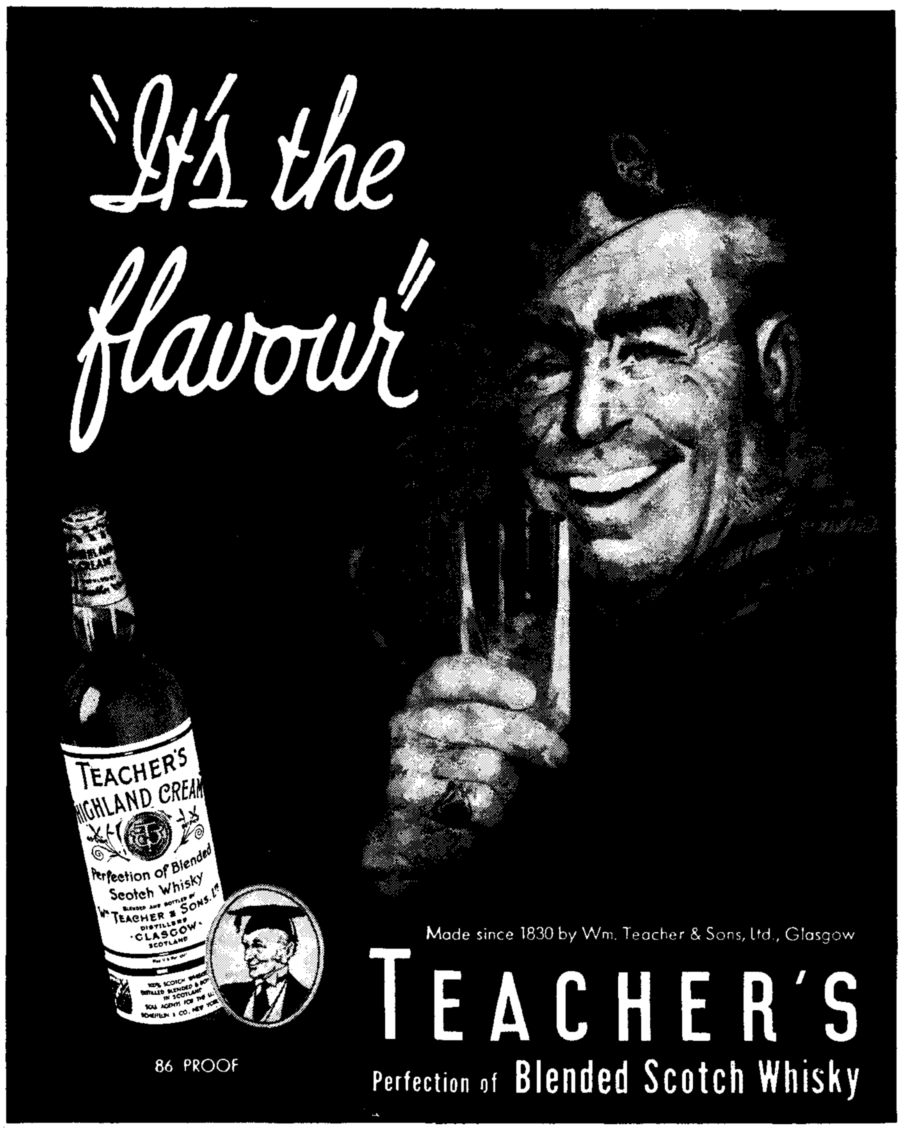

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unloaded guns, and crawled between the wires, only catching his pants once on a barb. Then he ran breathlessly across the pasture, dodging gopher holes and cowchips, and came up to the bush. There, beside the bush and about a foot from its round hole, was the ground squirrel, dead as a doornail, lying flat on its back with its long tail curled around its belly and its sharp little incisor teeth sticking out over its lower lip.

He said, "Oh, boy!" and then, "Oh, golly!" and looked down on the squirrel to see where he had hit. He found the bullet hole in the neck, up a little way from where he had aimed, and then he said, "Aw," remembering that he was shooting just a little uphill and his brother had told him, "You got to aim a little bit high, Joe, when you shoot uphill, and a little low when you shoot downhill, depending on how steep the grade is."

But he had shot the squirrel and that was what counted most of all. For now he was really a hunter, and he was ahead of all the other fellows who still had nothing but their old baby BB guns.

He picked up the squirrel, holding it by the tail, and started down the hill for the railroad tracks. He crossed the fence carefully, opening his rifle again and tossing the squirrel to the other side. He slid down the clay bank, getting the seat of his shorts dirty, and heard the whistle of the evening passenger from North Fork, just coming around the mile curve from the west. He ran down the tracks fifty feet to where the path led to the swimming hole, then moved back a good distance from the tracks so he wouldn't get cinders in his eyes and watched the passenger sweep past, slowing down for the depot just ahead.

Standing very proud and straight on the path, he held the rifle in his right hand and the squirrel by the tail with his left and looked at the faces of the passengers through the soot-specked windows. A few of them smiled and waved, and he lifted the rifle and waved in return.

Then the last car swished by and he saw Mr. MeeHaffy, the conductor, standing on the observation platform, and he grinned and waved the rifle again, and Mr. MeeHaffy smiled and doffed his conductor's cap and made a deep bow over the railing.

HE FOLLOWED the train down the tracks, watching it stop beside the depot and take on the evening mail and the cream cans from the depot truck. The baggageman checked over the bills of lading with Mr. Kraft, the depot agent, and then Mr. MeeHaffy waved his arm and you could hear his deep "All abooooard" echo out across the meadow. Then the train was moving, black smoke coming up in thick clots from the smokestack and the bell ringing brazenly as it slid away into the eastern haze which was settling thickly as the sun went down.

He crossed the bridge and cut back over the switch track and walked through the lumbershed, just in time, too, because his father's foreman, Elmer, was coming out to close the big doors and lock up for the night. Elmer put his hands on his hips and stopped, smiling at him.

He said, "Look what I got, Elmer."

Elmer said, "Say, Joe, that's good for your first day. Nail him the first shot?"

He said, "Yes, sir. Just one shot."

"How far?" Elmer asked.

He figured a minute and then said, "About from here to the creosote post pile."

"Thirty-five yards," Elmer said. "Good shooting for a .22. I'll tell you, Joe, tomorrow being Saturday, I'll finish up the work early after dinner and we'll drive out south of town and shoot some jack rabbits. How about that?"

He said, "Gosh, Elmer, if Dad will let me."

Elmer smiled and gave him a little pat on the back.

"Sure," he said, "sure he will, Joe. He knows you're getting to be all right with a gun. Now hurry up and show that squirrel to him. He's about ready to go home and you don't want to miss him."

He said, "Okay, Elmer. I'll see you tomorrow," and started to run fast through the lumbershed, feeling his legs strong and quick beneath him. . . .

His father was still in the office, just putting on his hat and folding the afternoon paper when he ran in. He held up the squirrel and said, "Look, Dad, I got one, first shot!"

His father smiled and said, "How far?"

He said, "Thirty-five yards, right through the neck. See—"

He held the squirrel up by the tail, and his father examined the hole solemnly and nodded his head in approval. "Nice shooting," he said. "Did you practice a few times before you shot him?"

He said, "Five times on the bridge. I shot at a tin can and hit it twice."

"Very good," his father said. "Very good for your first time. I see you remembered what Bill taught you."

He said, "Oh, yes, sir. I remembered everything and it worked just like Bill said it would, only I have to take my time and practice more."

"Well," his father said, a small glint of laughter in his eyes, "we can't very well bring that squirrel home, can we? Your mother might get mad."

HE THOUGHT that over and decided that his father was right. His mother would be proud of him, of course, but she sure wouldn't care for any old squirrel in her kitchen, especially a dead one; and, besides, his father would tell her everything, and that was all that mattered, anyway. He said, "What shall we do with it?"

"We'll drop it off at the filling station," his father said. "Butch's tomcat will take good care of it."

He followed his father through the front door, and just as they stepped from the porch to the sidewalk, his father said, "Have you got your cleaning rod and oil at home like I told you?"

He said, "Yes, sir. In my room."

"Good," his father said. "Now you clean the rifle as soon as we get home, and clean it three days after each time you shoot it, and be sure and keep it well oiled. It will last a long time that way. Oh, yes, I was just going to suggest something for you to do tomorrow."

He thought: Here comes something, maybe weed the garden all day long or paint the inside of the garage, and I'll get no hunt with Elmer.

And then his father said, "If you'll help Mother clean the house in the morning and sweep out the basement, you can go hunting with Elmer in the afternoon. It might be good practice shooting jack rabbits on the run. It'll improve your eye even if you don't hit any."

He said, "Oh, gosh! Yes, sir. I'll start right after breakfast."

"And if your mother says you do a good job," his father added, smiling over his cigar, "I'll let you use long rifle shells. They're much better for jack rabbits."

He said, "Thank you, Dad. I sure will do a good job on the house. You just wait and see."

They walked up the street and stopped at the filling station to give Butch Becker the squirrel, and Butch tossed it to his big yellow tomcat and complimented him on being a real nimrod, whatever that was. Then he and his father walked slowly by the business building in the block, passing Dale Beigler's saloon and the flagpole in the square, and started up the last two blocks toward their house, showing white and big through the trees.

His father looked down at him, smiling, and then he looked up and smiled at his father and put the .22 on his shoulder, just as his brother had shown him.

His father said, "I almost forgot. We got a letter from Bill this afternoon. Mother just called and told me. We'll read it after supper."

He said, "Gosh, that's swell," and felt very happy because Bill was fighting across the ocean and had time to write them letters every week.

He was tired and his shorts were dirty and he knew his mother would make him take a whole bath before supper, but he didn't care.

It had been a wonderful day.

THE END

The Week's Work

INTERNATIONAL

At the invitation of General Eisenhower, these publishers and editors flew to Europe and saw with their own eyes the incredible sights in the Nazi concentration camps in Germany. William L. Chenery, publisher of Collier's, is at bottom of picture

IN THE course of his long career as a newspaper and magazine executive, William L. Chenery often has reminded reporters that their primary function is to disseminate facts. "Get the facts," he urges them, "without regard to your own prejudice or my prejudice or anybody's prejudice. Then tell the facts and let them speak for themselves." Mr. Chenery, formerly editor and now publisher of Collier's, follows his own advice in "I Testify:," p. 14. The article, based on his firsthand observations of Germany's atrocity camps, presents facts which do indeed speak for themselves, and loudly.

Mr. Chenery was a member of the party of editors and publishers invited by the War Department to make a flying trip to the camps, to see and be convinced of the unbelievable. That trip, in Mr. Chenery's opinion, will have a long-range effect on the press of the country. For the editors and publishers were of varying political opinion, men who could not possibly be controlled for any propaganda purpose. And they all came home deeply pondering how they, as policy-makers of the press, could best contribute to a solution of the world conditions that made Buchenwald and Dachau possible. "We can at least help to keep alive the memory of the horror," Mr. Chenery says.

During the trip these executives shared the usual discomforts of war correspondents. The bathroom assigned to Mr. Chenery at the Excelsior Hotel in Munich was a good bathroom, he says, except it had only three walls. The fourth, facing the street, had been blown away. But such unconventionalities are scarcely noticed in a city numbed by war.

COLLIER'S cabled two war correspondents in Italy, asking each of them for an article on different phases of conditions in the newly liberated North. The two young men, James E. Roper of the United Press and John Chabot Smith of the New York Herald Tribune happened to be together when the cables arrived, so their effort became collaborative (Fascist Finale, p. 20), with Roper writing about the Partisans' share in the wind-up of the war, and with Smith evaluating Partisans and other groups in relation to the country's political and economic future.

The two authors are skilled correspondents, of the kind we in America are fortunate to have to act as our eyes and ears abroad. Each had acquired good educational and work background before going to report the wars.

Roper, who covered much of the Mediterranean and Italian fighting, came to the Washington Bureau of the United Press shortly after being graduated from the University of Tennessee in 1937. His mother is Mrs. Frederick Othman, wife of the former U.P. Hollywood correspondent who is now in Washington. Roper covered the Agriculture and Justice departments in Washington, then handled foreign news in New York. He went to Iceland with the first American troops, and left Reykjavik to go to London and the Mediterranean.

Smith, schooled at Princeton and at Trinity College, Cambridge, also started his newspaper career in Washington, as a Washington Post reporter, soon shifting to the New York Herald Tribune. In 1941, he did a series of stories exposing German drug sales in Latin America and went on to coverage of important national stories centering in Washington. In July, 1944, he reopened the Herald Tribune's Rome bureau. He speaks French, German; his Italian, he says, is improving.

Both men, besides traveling all over Italy, made excursions into Greece and Yugoslavia, sometimes narrowly missing death. Roper was awarded the Purple Heart for injuries to his eyes when his jeep was dive bombed. He suffered from double vision for weeks afterward, but recovered sufficiently to witness the war's and Mussolini's end.

Through an exclusive interview with the Italian Partisan leader who ordered the execution, Roper got the details of Mussolini's capture and death. That Partisan leader, whose battle name is "Eduardo," figures prominently in the current article.

Later, Roper watched the vengeful crowds curse and kick the dictator's body, string it up head down at a gas station, and put it on display at the morgue for all to stare at.

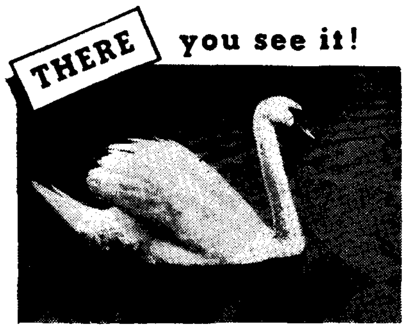
MAYBE it wasn't cause and effect but there was a great scarcity of men at the University of Minnesota last year, and Louise Roedocker, a student there, found she had time to write a novel as well as to hold down a part-time job and attend classes.

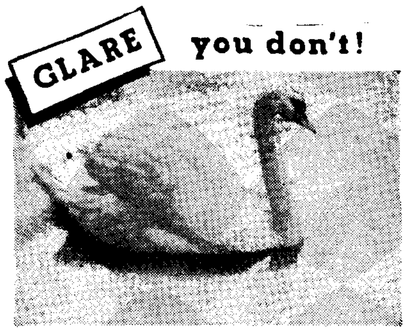
"The ratio of men to girls was about one to eight," she says, "and there weren't many parties. I spent most of my evenings writing."

Miss Roedocker, now doing editorial work in New York, is rewriting the novel before submitting it to a publisher. Meantime she has sold two short stories, the second one being One Love in a Lifetime, page 15.

But she's a lucky girl, anyway. Look at the way she found an apartment in New York where there are no apartments. "This renting agent turned out to be from Minneapolis, so he said sure, he'd get me an apartment, and he did." . . .

A. P.





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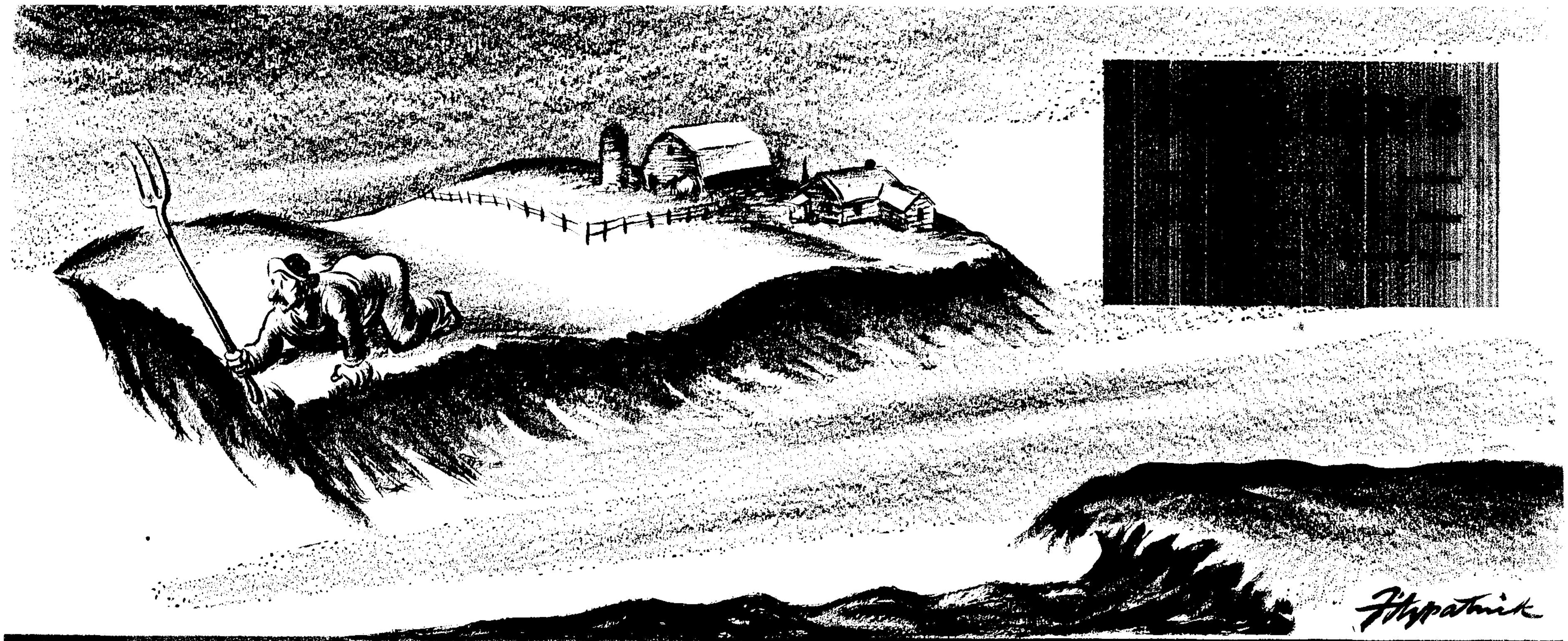

BEWARE [illegible]

ANOTHER World-War-I-and-after mistake that we ought to do our level best to avoid repeating this time is a boom in farm lands and alleged farm lands. Such a boom is already in the making; so much so that people who remember the last one are seriously worried.

In the other war, there were skyrocketing prices for farm lands in the Middle West and the Far West; overexpansion by established farmers and a lot of land-buying by people who never had farmed; ballooning wheat prices, and consequent overencouragement of farmers to rip the grass and root binders out of what was properly pasture land and sow it to wheat. A couple of years after that war, farm-product prices hit the skids, as they have done shortly after every one of our wars.

There followed the farm nightmare of the 1920s: mortgage foreclosures and tax sales, the building up of dust bowls where the pasture lands had been, destitution and misery overtaking more and more of our farm population. In the fall of 1929, depression hit the stock market, the cities and most industries, and stayed with us in greater or less degree throughout the 1930s.

Well . . . farm-land prices over the nation as a whole are up 43 per cent from four years ago; in many states, 60 per cent. Returning warriors often have an almost irresistible urge to anchor themselves on farms. High wartime farm-product prices have a deceptively permanent look to many people. Some fear postwar inflation and have a sort of mystical belief that ownership of just any piece of land anywhere will protect them somehow. War-plant workers in many cases are putting some of their big wages into farm land—some of it good, but plenty of it no good or just so-so.

If we don't stop, look, listen, and do something about all this now, we can travel the same disastrous road of boom-and-bust as we did in and after World War I. We're taking the first steps right now.

To make the matter still more ominous, we are told by the Department of Agriculture that farm machinery is now so efficient as to make it a safe bet that fewer people will be needed after this war than were needed before it to produce all the food we can eat and export. The farms, indeed, were somewhat overpopulated in the last few years before Pearl Harbor.

If you're a farmer already, you're hardly likely to be hooked by some shark or shyster marketing bad land. It does look as if you'd be wise, however, to be cautious about enlarging your present holdings, especially if you would have to go heavily into debt to do so.

If you're not a farmer, the first thing you need before you buy any "farm" land is expert and disinterested advice as to whether the land is as represented, and whether the price is reasonable. Whatever else you do, don't buy blind, just for the sake of owning some land.

If we don't all co-operate to damper down this incipient land boom, it can bust us. The other one did.

[illegible]

REPRESENTATIVE Robert Ramspeck (Dem., Ga.) comes up with a startling scheme for making Congress more efficient. He wants the size of present Congressional districts doubled, which of course would halve the number of districts; but he would have each new district elect two Representatives, one to be a lawmaker as now, and the other to do his constituents' "errand-boy" work (Ramspeck's name for it) before the innumerable government bureaus.

There isn't a chance in a thousand that the suggestion will be adopted, and maybe Ramspeck made it with tongue in cheek. But it does spotlight a fact of Congressional life which ought to be better known than it is. That fact is that all our senators and congressmen are called on to do an unconscionable amount of this errand-boy work. It consists in all manner of time-eating chores that have to do with getting services for private citizens out of our multiplex government.

Far from being the fat public-pay-roll loafer that many a citizen imagines him to be, the typical member of Congress is harried, hard-worked, and sometimes overworked. His salary is inadequate, and he can hire only a limited amount of help at government expense.

If some members of Congress occasionally cast stupid or mistaken votes on important measures because they haven't had time to give them the proper study, whose fault is it? It isn't theirs, except in this sense: that Congress has always been far too girlishly timid about voting itself salary increases and more hired help, even when a plain case for such steps existed. It has been afraid of voter reaction.

Our hunch is that Americans by and large are not so dumb about Congress and its value to them as they may once have been; and that they are nowadays in a mood to endorse with a minimum of squawking any steps Congress may take to increase its efficiency.

[illegible]

DR. NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER has retired as president of Columbia University in the City of New York, to call it by its full, resounding name; and we think a few comments are in order.

To our best knowledge, Doctor Butler, in his 44 years at Columbia's helm, came in for as much adverse criticism and satire as any educational leader in U.S. history. He was cursed for allegedly trying to make college education a mechanized, assembly-belt affair; for being too much a businessman and too little the old-line educator; for heinously inspiring other college presidents to follow his example, and so on.

It is true that Doctor Butler built Columbia up, from 4,000 students, few buildings and little money in 1901, to a peak of 30,000-odd students in 1939 and some $230,000,000 in capital resources in 1944.

What wrong there is in this, we cannot figure out. It has long been one American aspiration to make college education available to every youngster who can take it—and, we might add, to some who can't. That is not precisely a low or contemptible ideal.

In Doctor Butler's 44-year span at Columbia, we have moved closer and closer to that goal. Scholarships have increased greatly in number, tuition fees have been pared, more and more chances have been opened up for students to work their way through college. It looks as if we'll do even better along these lines after the war.

You don't get such results with small, busted colleges, badly paid faculties, and college executives who are too ethereal to get out and hustle for gifts, endowments, contributions, bequests and other forms of negotiable wealth.

"Nicholas Miraculous," as some clever fellow nicknamed Doctor Butler, knew all this, acted on his knowledge, and blandly ignored his detractors while so acting. We think that as he retires, at the age of eighty-three, he rates an enthusiastic salute from his fellow Americans.

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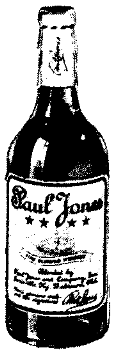

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